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ESSAYS BY DIVERS HANDS

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BEING THE  
TRANSACTIONS

OF THE  
ROYAL SOCIETY OF LITERATURE  
OF THE UNITED KINGDOM

NEW SERIES

VOL. I

EDITED BY SIR HENRY NEWBOLT, LL.D.

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## CONTENTS.

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	PAGE
Introduction. By Sir HENRY NEWBOLT, D.Litt., F.R.S.L.	v
<i>Papers read or contributed during Session 1919-1920:</i>	
I. Collins, and the English Lyric in the Eighteenth Century. By Dr. J. W. MACKAIL, M.A., F.R.S.L.	1
II. The Parson in Literature. By the Rev. P. H. DITCHFIELD, M.A., F.S.A., F.R.S.L.	25
III. An All-Embracing Genius: Leonardo da Vinci. By Professor ANTONIO CIPPICO, R.S.L.	61
IV. Juan Luis Vives: A Scholar of the Renascence. 1492-1540. By Professor FOSTER WATSON, F.R.S.L.	81
V. Walt Whitman and America. By the Right Hon. LORD CHARNWOOD, M.A., F.R.S.L.	103
VI. Culture as the Bond of Empire. By Sir FRANCIS YOUNGHUSBAND, K.C.I.E., F.R.S.L.	125



## INTRODUCTION.

BY SIR HENRY NEWBOLT, D.Litt., F.R.S.L.

LITERARY effort is by nature individualistic, and the transactions of a literary society in any single year might well seem to be an almost fortuitous collection. If six members out of two hundred write each upon the subject that pleases him, it will be difficult to ensure that their work shall be in any way focussed. But if the society exists for definite objects and has a definite policy of its own, it is possible that the contributions of those who address it in turn may be truly representative, each of a single aspect of its work and all together of the whole. This is certainly the case with the addresses contained in the present volume. They are diverse because they are the product of diverse minds, but they have a unity because they represent the definite activities for which our fellowship was created. These are the criticism and exposition of the English classics, the historical study of foreign literatures, the criticism of modern literature at home and abroad, and the philosophical study of literature and its place in human society. The writers before us have each traversed one of these regions.

Prof. Mackail needs no introduction to English readers. He has written with equal distinction of

English, of Latin and of Greek literature, and in all his criticism there is the lasting quality which is given only by fine scholarship. That scholarship is here brought to bear upon the poetry of Collins, a writer whose importance is out of all proportion to the slender volume of his work which survives. But the essay is no mere dissection or commentary. It is an exposition not only of the poet's art, but of the content and outlook of the critic's mind. The careful examination of one small flower has not excluded—it has actually made more vivid—our perception of the whole garden of the eighteenth century. We are led by curious little by-paths which we should not have found for ourselves, and come at every turn upon lyrical poets, from Herrick to Gray and from Blake to Matthew Arnold.

Dr. Ditchfield's paper, too, is work of the older school, but of a simpler character. It is a piece of pure exposition, dealing also with the work of many poets, but from a different point of view. The parson is taken as an English class-character, and we are shown as in a historical gallery the successive portraits drawn of him by English writers in verse or prose from Chaucer downwards. The lecturer is not concerned with the personality of these portrait painters, but with that of their subject. His aim is to produce a kind of composite picture of the English parson in the last five centuries, and this he does, not by forcing his own conclusions upon us (though he confides to us his own enthusiastic bias), but by giving us a very entertaining series of examples which he has brought together for his purpose.

Dr. Cippico's paper on Leonardo da Vinci takes us away from England and away from English character. We have had great Art in this island and great Science, but we have had no such combination of the two as could deserve the name of "an all-embracing genius." It is for dealing with a subject of this kind that our Society has long since equipped itself by the inclusion of distinguished foreigners among its members. We have here an account of a unique Italian mind, an account which an English writer could not have given us; for even if he had possessed the requisite knowledge of facts, the Italian point of view and the native associations must have been lacking. The interpretation would have been a view from a less advantageous angle, an effort more of the intellectual and less of the intuitive faculties.

Prof. Foster Watson also has to deal with non-English character in his sketch of the great scholar Vivès. But in this case the inherent difficulty is not so great. Vivès, like Erasmus, was a citizen of the world. In none of the civilised countries of Europe could he properly be called a foreigner. He lived and taught not only in Spain, France, Belgium and Italy, but for no less than twelve years he made his home in London and in Oxford. To suggest that an Englishman could not fully appreciate the mental outlook of Vivès would be an absurdity, for no other humanist teacher of the Renaissance had a greater share in forming the modern English mind, and no one of that age more clearly anticipated the educational ideals of the present. When Bishop Foxe invited him over from Italy to become the first

Professor of Humanity in his College of Corpus Christi at Oxford he was deliberately laying the foundations of the New Age in England, and setting on foot the most far-reaching development in our history. His contemporaries recognised the greatness of the occasion. At Vivès' first lecture in the Hall of Corpus in 1517 the King, Queen and Court, together with the Founder of the College and "almost all the whole number of Academicians," were present, "with great content and admiration." The lecturer, his learning, and his tutelary swarm of bees, became a legend in Oxford, and if his fame has, in later years, been almost forgotten, it is partly because his teaching has so completely prevailed. His personal influence has passed into the common stock of English culture, but the revival of his memory is none the less a pious and timely act.

Modern criticism in the present collection is represented by Lord Charnwood's address on Walt Whitman and America. It is a controversial and courageous paper. Probably no member of our Society possesses more knowledge of American history and character than the author of the 'Life of Abraham Lincoln,' and nothing that he has to say on such a subject can be set aside without a most careful weighing of the evidence. He has followed on one point the view of an American writer, whose book has seemed to many of us to be characterised rather by moral vigilance than by judgment or artistic sense. On the poetical side, too, his judgment is a severe one. These controversies are matters of opinion, and will probably be



settled only in the course of time. But the second part of the essay deals with a matter of immediate interest—it is a general estimate of the American achievement in poetry, an analysis of present literary conditions in the United States, including a consciousness of “the unique splendour of their history,” and a bold suggestion of a probable return in the New World “to very ancient fountains of living water.” It would be of great interest to hear, on some future occasion, the view of this critic upon the poetry of Mr. Vachel Lindsay as a signpost on the road of that return.

The last essay in our collection looks also to the future. By a happy coincidence its theme is the same as that of the last annual report submitted to our Society by its Foreign Secretary. Sir Francis Younghusband has, in fact, upon his own impulse and out of his own great experience of the nations of the East, developed the idea which is now the keynote of our international work. He looks at the four hundred millions of non-British peoples among whom he has lived and worked during the greater part of his life, and for these as well as for ourselves and for our Dominions he seeks for some common bond, which shall be stronger and more lasting than any hitherto relied upon. For force, material interest, politics and sectarian creeds he proposes that we should substitute social intimacy, art, thought and religion in the broadest sense—in a word, culture in its English and not in its German sense. These activities—the artistic, the intellectual, the spiritual—are the only ones which are the natural causes of sympathy, and not of conflict between nations. It is

only by following them that men can at the same time preserve their own distinctive national qualities, and yet attain a love and admiration of the world as a whole and a belief in its essential goodness. The writer's valuation of the elements of human life is, of course, no new one—it is implied in the very existence of our Society, and, by a second coincidence, Prof. Foster Watson has drawn our attention to its recognition in the Oxford of the Renaissance. "Either I am vastly mistaken," says Vivès, "or else nothing is more vital than that the people should learn to listen more attentively to what is consistent with the healthy restfulness of the State. . . . Thus they will know what is the use, the advantage and the aim of each element of welfare in its essential proportion, and how it should be estimated. They will then become like tried goldsmiths with their Lydian Stone to serve as indicator of the value of every individual factor which we seek or avoid, such as money, possessions, friends, honours, nobility, sovereignty, outward form, physique, pleasure, wit, condition, morality, religion." The effect of this study of the perspective of values is that people "will not devote their attention to the topics which render men stubborn rather than wiser, but they will be drawn to the studies by which the moral basis is consolidated and the whole life built up." These principles, with "a deepening love of mankind," formed for him, as for Sir Francis Young-husband, the basis for a world commonwealth, in which national feeling should be transmuted into an influence, not antagonistic, but reciprocal. Such an influence is not the conscious aim of any of the arts

or sciences, but it is the natural result of their activity, and shows them to be closely connected with the religious feeling. The nations have hitherto based alliances upon material interests, bargains and ambitions. We are about to advocate a different method, the method of the Humanists, and we are fortunate in having to support us at the outset the experience and the enthusiasm of an Englishman who is familiar, to a degree perhaps unique, both with the cities and the souls of nations.



# COLLINS, AND THE ENGLISH LYRIC IN THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY.

BY DR. J. W. MACKAIL, M.A., F.R.S.L.

[Read January 21st, 1920.]

By common consent it is in the sphere of the lyric that English poetry has throughout its history found its fullest, highest, and, one might say, most authentic expression. We possess a body of lyrical poetry to which, alike in range and in beauty, that of Greece alone is comparable. It extends in an all but continuous chain, gathering itself at intervals into a blazing mass of jewels, over the last six centuries. The lyrical voice is our native and natural speech. The lyrical note pervades nearly all our greatest poetry, even when that embodies itself in other forms. At the periods when the lyrical impulse has flagged, when its expression has become for a time forced or languid, the life-blood of our poetry in general has been slower; and our great lyric periods have been followed by a fresh impulse communicated from them into narrative or dramatic, descriptive or reflective poetry.

The eighteenth century—taking that convenient term in its broadly descriptive meaning and not as a strict chronological limit—is traditionally regarded as a period in which the lyric voice of poetry was

feeble or almost dumb. This view requires much qualification. But it is substantially true for nearly the first half of the century. In the course of the seventeenth century enormous over-production had resulted in something like exhaustion. Our lyrical poetry became an unweeded garden, possessed more and more by things rank and gross in nature. It went astray in various directions; it became tortuous or mystical or artificial. The lyric lost touch with Nature and life, and in doing so put off its own nature and lost its own enduring vitality. The immense popularity of Cowley lasted for a generation after his death; but only a few years later, Pope's question, "Who now reads Cowley?" could be asked. Cowley was, as Johnson says of him, "the last of the race"; "the last," he repeats, and adds more doubtfully, "and perhaps the best." He only outlived by three years Herrick, who may share with Fanshawe the claim to be the last of the Elizabethans, and Milton, that lonely figure who spans the gulf that lies, with its swarming and confused poetic movement, between the Elizabethan and the Augustan age. Meanwhile, the civilisation of our poetry was being taken in hand. Its entry into the general European Commonwealth of letters was effected, but at a great cost. Between its own decay of over-ripeness and the desperate remedies which were applied, it lost much of its distinctive national quality. The English lyric soon, say by the death of Dryden on May Day in the last year of the century, became faint, mannered and almost voiceless. For forty years there is no English lyrical poet of the first or even of the second rank. What

little vitality remained evident in the native instinct toward lyric expression was confined to a trickle of inspiration in the hymn-writers. Addison was one of these. Watts, Doddridge, Tate (who was Poet Laureate throughout the reign of Anne as well as being one of Pope's dunces), are followed a little later by John and Charles Wesley, the first collection of whose hymns was published in 1737. These are the more prominent figures in the chain of stepping-stones across a level and almost featureless marsh. The lighter and livelier verse of Prior and those of his contemporaries who wrote in the same manner, if it would be going too far to say that it can only be called poetry by courtesy, is hardly lyrical poetry except in a purely formal sense of the term.

But the lyrical instinct was not dead; though it had been driven for a time below the surface, its springs were flowing underground; it was waiting its time. The attempt to find any organic connection between political and poetical history, though enticing, is probably futile; but it is a curious fact that the resurgence of the lyric first shows itself just after the collapse in 1742 of the long rule of Walpole. It was in that year that Gray wrote his Eton Ode and his Hymn to Adversity, and began to compose his Elegy. It was in that year that Collins came before the world with the Persian (afterwards re-named the Oriental) Eclogues. It is in that year that the re-emergence of the lyric in England may be definitely fixed, in so far as definite dates can be usefully assigned to the stages of what is a continuous vital process.



The re-emergence of romance had then already begun. It was initiated in Scotland by the publication eighteen years earlier of Allan Ramsay's *Evergreen*. The immediate and immense popularity of that collection showed that the thirst for romance was all the keener for having been temporarily stifled. Thomson brought the movement down into England. His *Seasons*, by far the most popular poetical work of their age, while they are in a mixed manner, won their success more by their romantic than by their classical element, though it was not until later, after the appearance of Collins' *Odes* and the earliest published of Gray's, that he made his decisive mark as a romantic poet in the *Castle of Indolence*. But in 1742 the romantic movement was effectively launched. Its progress thereafter may be traced from point to point, like that of the successive waves of a swiftly-rising tide, through the two Wartons—Joseph Warton's *Odes*, in their own measure an epoch-making volume, were published almost simultaneously with those of Collins—Macpherson's *Ossian* (1742), Percy's *Reliques* (1765), Chatterton (1768), Cowper's first substantial volume of poems (1782), Blake's *Poetical Sketches* (1785), Burns' *Kilmarnock* volume (1786), Scott's *Lenore* (1796), and the full splendour of the new day in the *Lyrical Ballads* of 1798. The movement is both steady and continuous, and it covers, as will be seen from the dates just cited, the larger part—say nearly two-thirds—of the eighteenth century. In poetry, as in other fields of human development, that century was in truth, after the pause and recoil of its



earlier years, the great germinal and constructive age of the modern world. The nineteenth century built, largely and prodigally, on the foundations it had laid. Of the task and the achievement of the twentieth it is still too early to give an account or even to hazard a forecast.

This is to some extent a digression from the subject indicated by the title of my paper. For there is no necessary connection between the romantic movement and the lyrical impulse. Romance takes other forms than lyrical, and many of the greatest triumphs of the lyric are purely classical. But the digression was almost necessary in order to set the subject in its national and historical perspective. We may now return, with some added clearness of view, to the consideration of Collins and his poems.

There is perhaps no one else who takes a place in the foremost rank of our poets on so slender a volume of production. Collins died at the age of thirty-six. But the melancholia which had begun to prey upon him some eight years before his death developed rapidly into actual insanity, at first intermittent and then total. For effective purposes his life can hardly be reckoned much longer than that of Keats. Even so, a good deal of it is a blank as regards poetry. He was of unusual precocity, as is shown by the few extant fragments of what he wrote when he was a schoolboy at Winchester. But while he wrote easily and fluently, he wrote very intermittently; and he is said to have destroyed most of what he wrote almost as soon as it was written. In the years after he came to London

from Oxford he took to the life of a young man about town, lost the habit of concentration, and alternated fitful study with trivial though not scandalous dissipation. It may not be wholly fanciful to trace in him as in other Sussex poets a strain having some connection with their native air and soil: a certain *mollities* in both senses of that word, an exquisite delicacy and sensitiveness on the one hand and some weakness or lack of fibre on the other. Otway, the tenderest poet of his time (between whose life and that of Collins there are some striking resemblances) died in misery and broken-hearted at thirty-six. Hurdis, a shy and delicate genius, now almost forgotten, faded out of life at thirty-seven. They and Collins are the three principal names associated with Sussex in the annals of our poetry until quite modern times. It is right that the monument to Collins should be where it is—in Chichester Cathedral and not in Westminster Abbey. But one could wish that the verses inscribed on it had been by a finer hand than that of Hayley, another Sussex poet—if one may extend that name to him for the sake of a once great success and popularity—who is remembered now as the friend of Blake and Cowper, but has otherwise long been a spent fame.

The scanty records of Collins' life show that he was a born romanticist, that even in boyhood he was an explorer or re-discoverer, and had read largely and appreciatively in that older literature which was then still in general eclipse. With more strength of character and greater vitality he might have done work in the history and criticism of

English poetry comparable to that of his friend and school-fellow Thomas Warton, and inspired by a finer genius. A curious passage in Warton's *History of English Poetry* informs us of Collins' early researches into the then unmapped tract of the Elizabethan drama. Collins, who, he says, "had searched this subject with no less fidelity than judgment and industry," told him that the plot of Shakespeare's *Tempest* was taken from the Italian or Spanish romance of Aurelio and Isabella. This attribution is erroneous. Warton supposes that Collins' memory had then failed "in his last calamitous indisposition," and that he had given him a wrong name. It seems probable that he had come across and read the actual source, Antonio de Eslava's *Noches de Invierno*, while engaged on his project of a history of the revival of learning. For this work he had made considerable collections. Warton was informed, "on undoubted authority," that he had finished the preliminary dissertation for his history, and that it was written with great judgment, precision and knowledge of the subject. But on his death it and all his papers were destroyed in a fit of angry petulance by his sister, Mrs. Sempill, in whose care, such as it was, his last melancholy years were spent. Beyond the slender volume of his poems and a single letter, nothing of his work survives; nor is much added to these by the few records or notices made of him by his friends.

The poems of Collins can be enumerated in a few lines. They consist of the four *Persian Eclogues* of 1742; the twelve *Odes on Several Descriptive and Allegoric Subjects* of 1747; two short and

graceful pieces written at Winchester in 1739; the commendatory verses on Hanmer's Shakespeare of 1743—a piece of commonplace hack-work which ought to have died stillborn, and the reprinting of which among Collins' poems, though perhaps necessary, is an unfortunate necessity; the famous Ode on the Death of Thomson, in 1748, written soon after, and printed next year, and the no less famous Dirge in Cymbeline of about the same date; and the incomplete Ode on the Popular Superstitions of the Highlands of Scotland, given by him in MS. to Home in 1749, but printed for the first time forty years later in the Transactions of the Royal Society of Edinburgh.

To these pieces must be added one more—the interesting and characteristic verses “written on a paper which contained a piece of Bride-Cake given to the Author by a Lady.” It offers a curious analogy to Gray's Stanzas to Mr. Bentley. Each contains a single stanza in the author's finest manner; and a comparison of their technical evolution and of their cadences and phrasing (both being in the same metre, the elegiac quatrain) gives a good criterion of the kindred yet very distinct gift of the two poets: the more so, that the remaining stanzas in both pieces are uninspired and commonplace, and neither are nor profess to be poetry in any high sense. Here is Gray's:

“ But not to one in this benighted age  
Is that diviner inspiration given  
That burns in Shakespeare's or in Milton's page,  
The pomp and prodigality of heaven.”

And here Collins' :

“ Ambiguous looks that scorn and yet relent,  
Denials mild, and firm unaltered truth,  
Reluctant pride and amorous faint consent,  
And meeting ardours and exulting youth.”

It was by his Eclogues that Collins won such fame as he attained in his lifetime. They are remarkable, not merely as the work of a boy of twenty or twenty-one, but as the revelation of a new voice in poetry. That he had already mastered the management of the couplet was but a little thing, for that was already becoming, what Cowper called it later, “a mere mechanic art.” What gives the Eclogues their value is the appearance, in so artificial a medium as the pastoral, of an unequalled limpidity and a delicate sweetness. These qualities foreshadow the greater triumph of the Odes. The new voice has made itself audible, though it is still uncertain. In the middle of a passage of correct but quite conventional versification—

“ Here make thy Court amidst our rural scene  
And shepherd girls shall own thee for their queen.  
With thee be Chastity, of all afraid,  
Distrusting all, a wise suspicious maid.  
No wild desires amidst thy train be known,  
But Faith, whose heart is fixed on one alone,  
Desponding Meekness with her downcast eyes,  
And friendly Pity, full of tender sighs ”—

one comes, with a shock of amazed delight, on the line,

“ Cold is her breast, like flowers that drink the dew.”

Again, in the couplet,

“Here, where no springs in murmurs break away  
Or moss-crowned fountains mitigate the day,”

the notes are within the compass, and closely resemble the manner, of Pope's earlier poetry. But in this other, from the same *Eclogue*,

“Oft to the shades and low-roofed cots retired  
Or sought the vale where first his heart was fired,”

there is a sensitiveness and a melodiousness such as, except by Goldsmith, is hardly reached again for the next fifty years. And similarly, one must await Wordsworth for a feeling for Nature so true and so fine (though the diction remains Augustan) as there is in—

“What time the moon had hung her lamp on high  
And passed in radiance through the clondless sky.”

The twelve Odes of 1747 contain Collins' central lyric achievement. But the little shilling volume in which they appeared fell dead. Of the one thousand copies printed, hardly any were sold. When, a year later, Collins inherited some £2000 from an uncle, the first use he made of the money was to buy up and burn the remainder. They were not reprinted until twenty years later, when their author had long been dead.

One of the few purchasers of the luckless volume was Gray. His criticism on it, in a letter to Wharton, is very curious. The young author, he writes, is “the half of a considerable man”: he has “a fine fancy, modelled upon the antique, a bad ear, great variety of words, and images with no choice at all.” All Gray's criticisms deserve and repay careful study. But this one is startling in



its apparent want of appreciation. It seems as if he had written hastily, after a perfunctory and possibly a jealous glance at the Odes. This may be said in his justification, that the contents of the volume are very unequal, and some are of little merit. The Ode to Fear, after the magnificent opening couplet :

“Thou, to whom the world unknown  
With all its shadowy shapes is shown,”

drags and trails, and here and there in it the reproach of a bad ear is deserved. The Ode to Liberty ends in a huddle of images. The short Odes to Mercy and to Peace are undistinguished and even mechanical. A still lower level is reached in the Ode on the Death of Colonel Ross. But that was written to order, or at all events not spontaneously. Its interest lies in the fact that it is the raw material of what he distilled and crystallised into the matchless “How sleep the brave.” For these two divine stanzas praise would be an impertinence. They are almost too familiar to quote, yet I cannot deny myself the delight of quoting them, to linger once more over their exquisite clarity and unequalled melodiousness. By a further stroke of genius, Collins gave them no title ; they are merely headed “Ode written in the beginning of the year 1746.”

“How sleep the Brave, who sink to Rest  
By all their Country’s Wishes blest !  
When *Spring*, with dewy Fingers cold,  
Returns to deck their hallow’d Mold,  
She there shall dress a sweeter Sod  
Than *Fancy’s* Feet have ever trod.

“ By Fairy Hands their Knell is rung,  
 By Forms unseen their Dirge is sung ;  
 There *Honour* comes, a Pilgrim grey,  
 To bless the Turf that wraps their Clay,  
 And *Freedom* shall a-while repair,  
 To dwell a weeping Hermit there ! ”\*

That is neither classical nor romantic; the word “style” hardly applies to it, for it transcends style. It is simply and wholly right.

Now, the thought of the last four lines is thus put in the Ode on the Death of Colonel Ross in the Action of Fontenoy. Fontenoy was fought on May 11th, 1745, and the Ode probably written soon after the arrival of the news. Both Odes were first published, together, in Dodsley’s *Museum* early in 1746.

“ Blest youth, regardful of thy doom,  
 Aërial hands shall build thy tomb,  
     With shadowy trophies crown’d ;  
 Whilst Honour bath’d in tears shall rove  
 To sigh thy name thro’ every grove,  
     And call his heroes round.

“ But lo, where sunk in deep despair,  
 Her garments torn, her bosom bare,  
     Impatient Freedom lies !  
 Her matted tresses madly spread,  
 To every sod, which wraps the dead,  
     She turns her joyless eyes.”

To place the two stanzas and the two couplets into which they were transfigured beside each other and consider them is a lesson in the art of poetry. It would be strange that Collins let both pieces

\* The original typography is here reproduced.



have a place in his volume of Odes but for the personal reasons which made him unwilling to suppress the former. The lady to whom it was addressed had been affianced to Colonel Ross, and Collins himself was her rejected lover. As originally printed, the first of the two stanzas I have cited was even feebler. It ran :

“ O’er him whose doom thy virtues grieve  
 Aërial forms shall sit at eve,  
     And bend the pensive head !  
 And, fall’n to save his injur’d land,  
 Imperial Honour’s awful hand  
     Shall point his lonely bed !”

This is artificial, commonplace, and even barely grammatical. But the whole sixty lines of the ode are hopelessly mannered, and the manner is hopelessly bad. If it were the first that Gray’s eye lighted on, one can quite understand how it should have prejudiced him against the whole volume.

But on the very next page comes the immortal Ode to Evening. Of it little need be said ; it is beyond criticism. It has a secure and unquestioned place in the very front rank of English lyrics. The unrhymed stanza in which it is written he took from Milton’s celebrated experiment, the translation of the Fifth Ode of the First Book of Horace’s Odes. As a metrical device the two pieces stand wholly by themselves. None of the few later attempts in the same form—for instance, Joseph Warton’s graceful but undistinguished rendering of the Horatian Ode to the Spring of Bandusia (1776)—are of any consequence. But the two are only the same in their formal metrical structure. The rhythm and

phrasing of Milton's piece are all his own; he conveyed into it his unique and inimitable organ-tone. But Collins' ode is an equal feat of skill and genius, as inimitable in its delicacy and limpid clarity, like that of exquisite flute-music.

It seems to have passed over the heads of his contemporaries. The only one of the twelve Odes which became widely popular was the last, *The Passions: An Ode for Music*. This is in effect a new essay in the manner of Dryden's *St. Cecilia Ode*, and it therefore came on its readers with no strangeness; they were, as one might say, already educated for it. Langhorne, who represents the prevalent standard of criticism of his time, a generation after Collins' death, speaks of it with unbounded and indeed extravagant praise. "It contains," he says, "the whole soul and power of poetry," and "there may be very little hazard," he adds, "in asserting that this is the finest ode in the English language." In itself, though its excellence admits of no question, it is not Collins at its highest; it is, as has been well said of it, "a work of less equal sustentation and purity of excellence than the *Ode to Evening*," though this relative inferiority still leaves it in a high place.

Collins' delicacy and purity of taste had in it, as I observed already, an element of weakness; he had not the architectural genius or the driving power for sustained workmanship. That "solitary song-bird," though he seldom makes a false note, has a limited compass. In the unfinished *Ode on the Popular Superstitions of the Highlands*, which is much the longest of his poems, one feels him

working to a scale a little beyond his compass. The note is still pure and clear, but it is appreciably weakened.

From their own time till now, Collins and Gray have invited and almost compelled comparison. Their names are linked as the two great lyrical poets of their age, with no name to set beside or even next to them. They are strict contemporaries. Gray, though he outlived Collins by fifteen years, was born only five years before him. Both were fine scholars, though the scholarship of Gray was superior both in extent and in accuracy to that of Collins, as to that of any other Englishman of his time. The poetical product of both was small and exquisite. Gray's Odes, on the most liberal computation, only amount in all to some eight hundred lines, Collins' to about a thousand. Gray's output was small from his extraordinary fastidiousness and low vitality; Collins' rather from lack of concentration, and a febrile temperament which he had not strength to keep in control. Which of the two had the finer poetical genius is a question which has been much debated, but which it is idle to pursue. The distinction, not the comparison between them, is what is important. As to this, the well-known dictum of Swinburne may be taken as the starting-point: "As an elegiac poet," he says, "Gray holds for all ages to come his unassailable and sovereign station; as a lyric poet, he is simply unworthy to sit at the feet of Collins."

This saying, expressed as it is with Swinburne's usual vehemence of exaggeration, contains a truth; but it requires scrutiny and large qualification. In

the first place, the terms "lyric" and "elegiac" require to be defined if we are to keep clear of confusion. In their popular use they involve a cross-division. Technically the lyric in any poetry is a strophic form, meant to be, or capable of being, set to music and sung in verses. Technically the elegiac is simply one form of the lyric, written in couplets of a particular metrical construction. But from its specialised use for poems on the dead, it gradually acquired its modern sense, under which it is practically equivalent to the Greek threnody. Already when it passed from Greek to Latin it had become the *flebilis elegia* of the Augustan poets. Nowadays it is used loosely and vaguely to describe reflective poetry of a grave and serious, though not necessarily of a melancholy tone. It is clear therefore that the elegy may be, and it often is, merely one particular variety of the ode. Both names are often used indifferently of the same poem. Gray's Elegy—a fact generally forgotten—is so named in virtue of the last three stanzas, the epitaph with which the piece concludes. Dryden's poem "to the pious memory of Mrs. Anne Killigrew" was entitled by him an Ode, but is generally, and reasonably, classed among elegies. Collins' own two lovely poems, most characteristic in his peculiar excellence, and equal to his very best, "In yonder grave a Druid lies," and "To fair Fidele's grassy tomb," are both elegiac; but the former was entitled by him an Ode, and the latter a Dirge. What Swinburne's criticism seems to imply is, first, that Gray's poetical sovereignty rests on his Elegy—which as a matter of historical fact and of the *communis sensus generis*

*humani* is true—and further, that apart from it, his body of Odes, that is to say his other lyric poetry, is of inferior rank to that of Collins. On a question of this kind opinions will always differ, as they always must differ when the attempt is made to weigh one kind of poetry in the scales against another kind of poetry. For the lyric in its full sense covers a vast field, in which there is room for kinds which are so disparate as to be properly not comparable.

While Gray owes his universal popularity to his Elegy, it was not what he desired his fame to rest upon. It would have been as popular, he said of it himself with a touch of bitterness, if it had been written in prose. In truth this is its unique value—that it embodies, in faultless and imperishable verse, thoughts and emotions which are universal and eternal. But his Odes are likewise, in the full sense, classics. They have their faults; the minute laboriousness of workmanship is sometimes too evident, the inspiration sometimes flags. There are even passages which give colour to the accusation that has been (most exaggeratedly) made against him of “fanfaronade and falsetto.” From these faults at least the easier and more spontaneous lyric of Collins is always free. He may be, he is, sometimes commonplace, but he is never strained. His wonderful clarity never deserts him. It is a flowing spring, not drops wrung out. His greatest felicities always seem his most spontaneous utterances. While he wrote in the style of his own age, he transmuted it into something individual; and so he is the least mannered, not only among the poets of his time, but almost in the whole body of our poetry.



Language in his hands becomes absolutely or all but absolutely translucent. Even his return upon the vocabulary of the older poets, though he occasionally indulges in it a little more, perhaps, than one could wish, never passes into pedantry or artificiality. In the Ode to Evening there is only one single word, *brede*—"with brede ethereal wove" of which we cannot say that it is not merely the right word, but once it is there, apparently the most straightforward and most inevitable. Perhaps the one thing that can be called a mannerism in him is his fondness for compound epithets; *young-eyed* and *chaste-eyed*; *sky-born* and (less happily) *sky-worn*; *fancy-blest*, *soul-subduing*, *war-denouncing*, *rich-haired*, *green-haired*, *bright-haired*, *light-embroidered* and *sphere-descended*; and, used by him twice with triumphant beauty, *dim-discovered*. Here Collins followed the example set and popularised by Thomson in *The Seasons*. *Dim-discovered* actually occurs there, in one of the finest passages of the poem (lines 939-950 of *Summer*),

"Ships, dim-discovered, dropping from the clouds."

But in Collins' hands it takes a new beauty. His tact in the use of the device, unlike that of Thomson, who overdoes it, is nearly faultless; *sphere-found* and *scene-full* are perhaps his only two failures. To have gained this enrichment without impairment of clarity is one of his wonderful achievements.

I am not sure whether it has ever been noticed that in the celebrated vindictory preface by John Wesley to the collection of his own and his brother's hymns, there is what seems to be an oblique censure

on Collins in this matter. "By labour," Wesley writes, "a man may become a tolerable imitator of Spenser, Shakespeare or Milton; and may heap together many pretty compound epithets, as *pale-eyed*, *meek-eyed*, and the like; but unless he be born a poet, he will never attain the genuine spirit of poetry." *Pale-eyed* and *meek-eyed*, it will be remembered, both occur in Milton's Nativity Ode, and they no doubt suggested, or helped to suggest, Collins' similar formations, though, of course, *young-eyed* was taken by him straight from Shakespeare. Only, Collins happened to be born a poet.

Even in his inferior odes, Collins often reaches, by instinct and seemingly without effort, to his incomparable translucency. Thus for instance, in the Ode on the Poetical Character:

"When He, who called with thought to birth  
Yon tented sky, this laughing earth,  
And dressed with springs and forests tall,  
And poured the main engirting all."

Thus in the Ode to Liberty:

"Beyond yon braided clouds that lie  
Paving the light-embroidered sky."

The "return to Nature," of which he was one of the prime initiators, expresses itself in phrases to which Arnold, a century later, offers the nearest parallel. "Teach me but once like him to feel," Collins writes of Shakespeare; the cry is that of Arnold's Memorial Verses on the Death of Wordsworth, "But who, ah! who will make us feel?" In the noble Ode to Simplicity, the eighth stanza sums up what may be called Collins' poetical doctrine

or his poetical message, though both these terms are open to exception :

“ Though taste, though genius bless  
 To some divine excess,  
 Faints the cold work till thou inspire the whole ;  
 What each, what all supply  
 May court, may charm our eye,  
 Thou, only thou, canst raise the meeting soul ! ”

Of Collins, as of some other poets, notably of Coleridge—to whom Collins presents some curious and fertile analogies—it is to be observed that their finest and most characteristic work is wholly unique. Where it can be brought into comparison with that of other poets of the first rank it is apt to be inferior to theirs. It would be tempting to pursue this point somewhat into detail, but would lead us too far from the main subject at present. One pair of instances may suffice to indicate what I mean. When Collins writes in the Ode on Popular Superstitions,

“ For him in vain his anxious wife shall wait  
 Or wander forth to meet him on his way ;  
 For him in vain at to-fall of the day  
 His babes shall linger at the unclosing gate ” \*

one is inevitably reminded of the stanza in Gray's Elegy, written at almost exactly the same time :

“ For them no more the blazing hearth shall burn  
 Or busy housewife ply her evening care,  
 No children run to lisp their sire's return,  
 Or climb his knees the envied kiss to share.”

Collins' lines have, even here, his wonderful

\* He had written “ at the cottage gate ” first.



limpid quality, and his felicity in the avoidance of merely ornamental or otiose epithet, the great snare, as Goldsmith pointed out, of the poets of that period. Note, too, the particularity (a note of the lyric) in contrast with Gray's superb generalisation. But Gray's touch is stronger, his music richer and ampler. The contrast of the two quatrains gives the key to the distinction between Gray and Collins as lyricists.

Similarly, when reading in Coleridge's Ode to Sara,

"The tears that tremble down your cheek  
Shall bathe my kisses chaste and meek  
In pity's dew divine ;  
And from your heart the sighs that steal  
Shall make your rising bosom feel  
The answering swell of mine :"

one's mind passes at once to Wordsworth's—

"And vital feelings of delight  
Shall rear her form to stately height,  
Her virgin bosom swell ;  
Such thoughts to Lucy I will give  
While she and I together live  
Here in this happy dell :"

and beside it, Coleridge's lines, with all their melodious ease, lose their lustre and faint like a dazzled morning moon.

The poetical affinity between Collins and Coleridge at which I have hinted has, I think, largely escaped notice. It would repay study. Even the circumstances of their life, as well as their peculiarities of mental temperament, present curious analogies. Both had, and doubtless had to pay for, a remark-

able precocity of genius. Both suffered from languor of mood and infirmity of will. Both wrote with seemingly effortless ease, and with fluctuating inspiration. The poetical production of both, or what matters of it, is confined within a space of five or six years, followed in the one by mental collapse and early death, in the other, by that joyless atrophy of which Coleridge himself in his swan-song, the *Dejection Ode*, has given the perfect and immortal account.

In one of Coleridge's early pieces, written in 1793—or so he says, and in this instance there seems no reason to believe that he is not telling the truth—there is a passage which, if it were now to be published for the first time as a recovered fragment by Collins, would probably be accepted as his without question; for the style, rhythm and diction are in all respects indistinguishable from his :

“For lo ! attendant on thy steps are seen  
Graceful Ease in artless stole  
And white-robed Purity of soul,  
With Honour's softer mien ;  
Mirth of the loosely flowing hair,  
And meek-eyed Pity eloquently fair,  
Whose tearful cheeks are lovely to the view,  
As snowdrop wet with dew.”

Had Collins, at the critical period described with such just insight and sympathetic understanding by Johnson, when he was adrift as a young man in London, come into contact with a complementary genius like that of Wordsworth, it is difficult to set limits to the poetical splendours which might have resulted. But that is a vain speculation. As it was,

he had no one but the two Wartons, whose outlook was in effect the same as his own, and who in any case were not made out of the material that strikes fire by contact. Had he known Gray, perhaps? Yet even there the essential difference—one of pitch as well as of key—might only have produced an incurable discord.

As it is, the tiny volume of his poems places him imperishably in England's Helicon. It gives for perpetuity that image of which Wordsworth speaks in the lines headed "Remembrance of Collins," composed, like the exquisite Ode to which they refer, on the Thames near Richmond:

"The image of a poet's heart,  
How bright, how solemn, how serene!"

Fame did not come to him in his life; but it did not fail to overtake him later, and it will not leave him now.



## THE PARSON IN LITERATURE.

BY THE REV. P. H. DITCHFIELD, M.A., F.S.A., F.R.S.L.

[Read June 2nd, 1920.]

THINK not, ladies and gentlemen, that I would disparage my profession by giving to my paper this title. In spite of the taunts of the insidious and the common speech of the vulgar, the term "parson" is an honourable distinction. The parson is the *persona* of the parish, the person who manages everything and everybody in the place where he resides. In older times he had the title of "Dominus" and was addressed as "Sir," and you will find him so described in our register books.

In the course of his varied experience he has had much to do with literature. The parson is a prolific author, and it would require a library as big as the British Museum to contain all the books that he has written. In this paper I shall not concern myself about parsonic authorship, and shall equally steer clear of the lives of clergymen. So many biographies of bishops and clergy, varying from the ponderous tome to the humble funeral sermon, have been written, that if I were to attempt to recount a tithe of what has been published I should have to prolong my discourse till midnight. All that I can attempt this afternoon is to set before you what distinguished writers have said about him in their novels, poems, songs and romances. He is a somewhat prominent person, whether as bishop, rector or

curate, and therefore naturally attracts the attention of authors, either as critics or sympathisers.

The parson appears oftentimes in the literature of every age, and this distinction testifies to his importance. Some descriptions are flattering, others much the reverse. But on the whole he is tenderly treated; his good deeds and his attention to his duties are recorded with much respect, while the glaring faults and eccentricities of individuals escape not the lash of satire. Nor is this partiality for parsons confined to English authors. Many of you will have read Balzac's 'Le Curé de Village,' wherein he paints such a beautiful portrait of the country parson, and you will remember that charming character of a bishop drawn by Victor Hugo in 'Les Misérables.'

In England we go back to the father of English song, Chaucer, who describes so tenderly the "poor parson of a town," *i. e.* of a scattered village, and not what we understand by a town. I need only quote a few lines, as they are well known :

"A good man there was of religion,  
That was a poor parson of a town.  
But rich he was of holy thought and work :  
He was also a learned man, a clerk,  
That Christes Gospel truly would he preach.  
His parishen dovoutly would he teach.  
Benign he was and wonder diligent  
And in adversity full patient."

And there are about forty more lines of tender panegyric. A little-known work, entitled Myrc's 'Instructions to Parish Priests,' written in verse in the fifteenth century, says much of the duties

required of the medieval clergy; and William Langland in 'Vision of Piers Plowman' is a strong advocate for confining the ministry to those of gentle birth. He does not approve of bondmen and bastards and beggar-children being made bishops and archdeacons, and inveighs against cobblers' sons and beggars' brats getting book-learning and becoming bishops, sitting with the peers of the land, while knights kneel to them, and the father of such a prelate remaining a poor cobbler "with grees his teeth toyling of leather battered as a saw." This idea that ploughmen's sons should follow the plough and tradesmen's sons should go to their father's calling was prevalent at the time of the Reformation and was strongly opposed by Cranmer, who contended that poor men's sons should have the benefit of education since God gives us His great gifts of grace, of learning and other perfections in all sciences and to all kinds and states of people indifferently.

As Fellows and Members of the Royal Society of Literature, you have doubtless read all Spenser's works from cover to cover. I must confess I have not, but I have found one of the sweetest stanzas in the English language. It refers to a parson, Archbishop Grindal, who fell foul of the imperious Queen Elizabeth and was suspended from his functions. Spenser transposed the syllables of Grindal's name and converted it into Algrind, and wrote :

"One day he sate upon a hill  
As now thou wouldest me :  
But I am taught by Algrind's ill  
To love the low degree."



The question occurs to me to ask, *What is literature?* I scarcely think that such scurrilous pamphlets as the Mar-Prelate tracts can be included in that august term. The vulgarity and indecency of these publications place them beyond the pale, and I think I am right in passing them by, though they might amuse or disgust you. Certain epigrams, such as those on the persecuting wretch Bonner or on the amusing Bishop Corbett, may be omitted, and also Heylin's "Cyprianus Anglicus," which is practically a biography of Laud.

There is rather a good description of a parson in Ben Jonson's "Magnetic Lady" just before the Civil War. He seems to have been rather a fussy autocrat. "Compass," a character in the play, says :

"He is the Parson of the Parish here,  
And governs all the games, appoints the cheer,  
Writes down the bill of fare, pricks all the guests,  
Makes all the matches and the marriage feasts—  
Without the ward : draws all the parish wills,  
Designs the legacies, and strokes the gills  
Of the chief mourners : and whoever lacks  
Of all the kindred he has first his blacks.  
Thus holds he weddings up and burials  
As the main thing : with the gossips' stalls  
Their pews ; he's top still at the public mess :  
Comforts the widow and the fatherless  
In funeral sad ; sits 'bove the alderman :  
For of the wardrobe quest he better can  
The mystery, than of the Levite Law :  
That piece of clerkship doth his vestry awe.  
He is, as he conceives himself, a fine  
Well furnished and apparelled divine."

This might be quoted as a refutation of the abominable charges brought against the clergy by Lord Macaulay in the well-known passage in his history. That, too, is literature, but the charge-sheet is so long and the charges so full of slander and untruth that I shall pass them by, and content myself with quoting Mr. Gladstone's judgment of Macaulay's indiscretions. He wrote: "While history in the form of romance is commonly used to glorify a little our poor humanity, the illusions of this romance in the form of history go only to dishonour and degrade. That Williams, that Burnett, that Milton should have personal embellishment much beyond their due is no intolerable evil. But the case becomes far more grievous when a great historian, impelled by his headstrong and headlong imagination, traduces alike individuals and orders, and hurls them into a hot and flaming inferno of his own."

Clerical poverty has produced many evils. Foremost among them was the race of the hangers-on to the families of the great, the tame Levites, as they were called, or Mess-Johns, or trencher-chaplains. Hall in his satires paints a painful picture of the poor chaplain's lot:

"A gentle squire would gladly entertain  
Into his house some trencher-chappelain,  
Some willing man that might instruct his sons,  
And that could stand to good conditions.  
First, that he lie upon a truckle bed,  
While his young master lieth overhead :  
Second that he do on no default  
Ever presume to sit above the salt :

Third, that he never change his trencher twice.  
Fourth, that he use all common courtesies,  
Sit bare at meals, and one half rise and wait :  
Last, that he never his young master beat,  
But he must ask his mother to define  
How many jerks she would his breach should line.  
All these observed he would contented be,  
To get five marks and winter liverie."

The poor wretch was treated like an upper menial, and was the butt of the Squire's jests and the children's mischievous pranks. The servants treated him in a familiar fashion, and he was dismissed from the dinner table as soon as the pastry appeared, as Hall remarks, "picking his teeth and sighing with his hat under his arm." Gray alludes to this early dismissal of the parson from the board in his rhymes :

"Cheese that the table's closing rites denies  
And bids me with the unwilling chaplain rise."

The poet Crabbe was domestic chaplain to the Duke of Rutland, and was treated with great kindness and consideration. Being of lowly origin, he was somewhat unaccustomed to the ways of polite society. According to his latest and most complete biographer, Monsieur René Huchon, his duties were somewhat delicate : if his advice was asked he had to reply discreetly without appearing to claim the privileges of an intimate friend. If the Duchess brought him one of her children to be scolded for swearing it was necessary to measure out the blame so as to spare his mother's feelings and to preserve the respect due to the little lord of four years old. He had to provide poetical effusions for the lady

visitors of the castle, and sometimes the guests at the ducal table were rather trying, as Crabbe shows in one of his tales :

“ With wine before thee and with wits beside,  
Do not in strength of reasoning confide.  
What seems to thee convincing, certain, plain,  
They will deny and dare thee to maintain ;  
Men gay and noisy will o’erwhelm thy sense,  
Then loudly laugh at truth’s and thine expense ;  
While the kind ladies will do all they can  
To check their mirth and cry ‘The good young man.’ ”

Politics, too, literally embittered his cup, and more than once he was compelled to take a glass of salt-water because he refused to join in Tory toasts. No wonder Crabbe wished to escape from ducal halls and “ have a little hut, that he might hide his head in, where never guest might dare molest, unwelcome and unbidden.”

I will pass over what George Herbert said of these chaplains and the advice he gave. Boswell once remarked to Dr. Johnson upon the diminution of private chaplains, arguing that it was a sign of less religion in the nation. The sage replied, “ Neither do I find any State servants in great families. There is a change in the customs.” It was as well that there was this change both for the sake of the tame Levite and also for the dignity of religion.

There was one season in the year when parsons were not altogether popular, and that was (I might almost say is) tithing time.

In Dryden’s harvest-home song, introduced into his play “King Arthur,” I find this verse which does

not say much for the morality of the old-fashioned tithe-payers :

“ We’ve cheated the parson, we’ll cheat him again,  
 For why should a blockhead have one in ten ?  
     One in ten, one in ten ;  
 For why should a blockhead have one in ten,  
 For prating so long, like a book-learned sot,  
 Till pudding and dumpling burn to pot ?  
     Burn to pot.”

Cowper’s amusing old song, called “Tithing Time,” is doubtless well known to you and need not be quoted. Thomas Wasbourne (1608–1687) wrote some quaint verses describing the unwillingness of persons to pay tithes in his day :

“ To pay the tenth fleece they refuse,  
     As shepherd’s dues.  
 They know a trick worth two of that ;  
     They can grow fat,  
 And wear their fleece on their own back,  
     But let him lack  
 Meat, drink and cloth and everything  
 Which would support and comfort bring.”

The Rev. Leonard Bacon, of Southey’s ‘Love Story,’ is a good specimen of an old-time parson, who held a small living in the West Riding of Yorkshire. Left an orphan, educated by some wealthy relatives at a grammar school, and having through their influence gained a scholarship, to which his own deserts might have entitled him, he went to the University and obtained a fellowship. “Leonard was made of Nature’s finest clay, and Nature had tempered it with the choicest dews of heaven.” The story of his love may be left to more romantic

scribes, and may be studied in the original. He took his bride to his living, a few miles from Doncaster. The house was as humble as the benefice, which was worth less than £50 a year; but it was soon made the neatest cottage in the country round, and upon a happier dwelling the sun never shone. A few acres of good glebe were attached to it, and the garden was large enough to afford healthful and pleasurable employment to its owners.

A good kitchen was its best room, and in its furniture an Observantine friar would have seen nothing that he could have condemned as superfluous. His college and Latin school-books, with a few volumes presented to him by the more grateful of his pupils, composed his library; they were either books of needful reference or such as upon every fresh perusal might afford new delight. But he had obtained the use of the church library at Doncaster by a payment of twenty shillings, according to the terms of the foundation. Folios from that collection might be kept three months, and as there were many works in it of solid content as well as of sterling value, he was in no such want of intellectual food, as too many of his brethren are. The parish contained between five and six hundred souls. There was no one of higher rank among them than entitled him, according to the custom of those days, to be styled "gentleman" upon his tombstone. They were plain people, who had neither manufactories to corrupt, ale-houses to brutalise, nor newspapers to mislead them. At first coming among them he had won their goodwill



by his affability and benign conduct, and he had afterwards gained their respect and affection in an equal degree.

Such was the amiable character depicted by the poet Southey, a good type and a faithful picture of hundreds of country clerics who quietly did their duty without any fuss or ostentation. The immortal Dr. Syntax, the hero of Combe's poem, is another type of old-fashioned cleric. The poet thus describes him :

“Of Church preferment he had none ;  
Nay, all his hopes of that had gone ;  
He felt that he content must be  
With drudging in a curacy.  
Indeed on every Sabbath-day  
Through eight long miles he took his way  
To preach, to grumble, and to pray ;  
But while he with his smiles approved  
The virtue he so dearly loved,  
He did not spare the harsher part,  
To probe the ulcer to the heart ;  
He sternly gave the wholesome pain  
That brought it back to health again,  
Thus the commands of Heav'n his guide,  
He liv'd—and then in peace he died.”

We cannot follow the learned doctor's adventures, so humorously depicted by Rowlandson.

At length he died, and then :

“The village wept, the hamlets round  
Crowded the consecrated ground ;  
And waited there to see the end  
Of Pastor, Teacher, Father, Friend.”

Sir Roger de Coverley was fortunate in having an excellent chaplain, with whom he lived on terms



of great friendship. The *Spectator* describes him as a venerable man who had lived in the squire's house about thirty years, a person of good sense and some learning, of a very regular life and obliging conversation. Sir Roger tells how, being afraid of being insulted with Latin and Greek at his own table, he desired a friend to find for him "a clergyman rather of plain sense than much learning, of a good aspect, a clear voice and sociable temper, and if possible a man that understood a little of backgammon." The gentleman selected had all the above qualifications, and was a good scholar, though he did not show it. Sir Roger gave him the parsonage of the parish, and had settled upon him a good annuity. He ventured daily to ask the knight for some benefactions for the tenants, but never for himself. There had never been a lawsuit in the parish since he had lived among them; if any dispute arose they applied to him for the decision. At his first coming Sir Roger made him a present of all the good sermons which had been printed in English, and only begged of him that every Sunday he would pronounce one of them in the pulpit. Accordingly the chaplain digested them into such a series that they followed one another naturally, and made a continued system of practical divinity. "Sir Roger presently asked the chaplain, 'Who preaches to-morrow?' (for it was Saturday night), and was told the Bishop of St. Asaph in the morning and Dr. South in the afternoon. He then showed us his list of preachers for the whole year, where I saw with a great deal of pleasure Archbishop Tillotson, Bishop Sanderson,

Dr. Barrow, Dr. Calamy, with several living authors who have published discourses of practical divinity. I no sooner saw this venerable man in the pulpit but I very much approved of my friend's insisting upon the qualifications of a good aspect and a clear voice, for I was so charmed with the gracefulness of his figure and delivery, as well as with the discourse he pronounced, that I think I never passed any time more to my satisfaction. A sermon repeated after this manner is like the composition of a poet in the mouth of a graceful actor. I could heartily wish that more of our country clergy would follow his example, and instead of wasting their spirits in laborious compositions of their own would endeavour after a handsome elocution, and all those other talents that are proper to enforce what has been penned by greater masters. This would not only be more easy to themselves, but more edifying to the people."

Very different from this account of the good relations existing between Sir Roger and his chaplain is the picture drawn by the *Spectator* of another parish, where the squire and parson were at logger-heads. They lived in a perpetual state of war. "The parson is always preaching at the squire, and the squire, to be revenged on the parson, never comes to church. The squire has made all his tenants atheists and tithe-stealers, while the parson instructs them every Sunday in the dignity of his order, and insinuates to them, in almost every sermon, that he is a better man than his patron. In short, matters are come to such an extremity that the squire has not said his prayers either in

public or private this half-year, and that the parson threatens him, if he does not mend his manners, to pray for him in the face of the whole congregation. Feuds of this nature, though too frequent in the country, are very fatal to the ordinary people, who are so used to be dazzled with riches that they pay as much deference to the understanding of a man of an estate as of a man of learning, and are very hardly brought to regard any truth, how important soever it may be, that is preached to them, when they know there are several men of five hundred a year who do not believe it."

Fielding draws a charming picture of the country parson in his novel 'Joseph Andrews,' and throughout his books clerical types are constantly appearing, and where the characters are worthy, are drawn tenderly and carefully and with a gentle touch. George Eliot and Anthony Trollope have, perhaps, introduced into their novels more numerous clerical types, and the former has applied the microscope more constantly in revealing the inner life of spiritual pastors; but Fielding's gallery of clerical pastors is well worthy of close study, revealing as it does some of the changes which have taken place in the condition of parsons since his day. Though outward details have changed, on the whole parson nature, which is but human nature after all, has not changed. There are Supples, Thwackums, and Trullibers, Dr. Harrisons and Abraham Adamses among the clergy still. Indeed, probably in no other profession could so many men of the type of the last-named be mentioned—not that it is by any means a common type. And the troubles of the

parson were pretty much what they are now. The age was rough and rude, in spite of its artificiality, and perhaps the parson shared a little in its roughness. But he had then, as now, to fight manfully against corruption and vice, and may have been as successful as in these days of over-organisation.

The sketch of Abraham Adams is delightful. He was an excellent scholar, a perfect master of the Greek and Latin languages, had a good knowledge of the Oriental tongues, and could read French, Italian and Spanish. A severe student, he had treasured up a fund of learning rarely to be met with in a University. He was a man of good service, good parts and good nature, but as entirely ignorant of the ways of the world as an infant. As he had never any intention to deceive, so he never suspected such a design in others. He was generous, friendly and brave, but simplicity was his characteristic. Such passions as malice and envy were to him unknown. His virtue and his other qualifications made him an agreeable companion, and had so much endeared and well-recommended him to a bishop that at the age of fifty he was provided with a handsome income of twenty-three pounds a year, with which he could not make any great figure, because he lived in a dear country, and was a little encumbered with a wife and six children. Fielding usually makes his parsons poor, but their poverty he deems no disgrace to them, but rather to those who accepted their ministrations and yet refused to provide for their needs. One of his clerics remarks, "I apprehend my order is not the object of scorn, nor that I can become so, unless by being a dis-

grace to it, which I hope poverty will never be called."

Parson Adams, according to the hero, Joseph Andrews, was "the best man in the world," and he richly deserves that title. Fielding intended to depict a character of perfect simplicity, a thoroughly good-hearted man. We see him in sore straits for money, smoking his pipe, his constant friend and comfort in his afflictions, leaning over the rails of the gallery of an inn-yard, meditating deeply, assisted by the inspiring fumes of tobacco. He had on a nightcap drawn over his wig, and a short great-coat, which half covered his cassock. He was rather indignant because his landlord, Tow-ouse, would not advance him three guineas upon the security of a volume of manuscript sermons which he was taking to a publisher. He meets his brother cleric, Mr. Barnabas, and takes part of a bowl of punch with him, an exciseman and the doctor. The parsons immediately begin to "talk shop," and their companions listen to a full hour's discourse on small tithes and then a dissertation on the hardships of the inferior clergy, and then on poor old Parson Adams's unlucky sermons, which Barnabas tells him nobody will read and no publisher print. He had set out for London on purpose to present these sermons to the attention of a publisher. They were, he thought, safe in his saddle-bags; but, lo! they were left behind at home!

We see him again trudging homewards, his mind perfectly at ease, contemplating a passage in Aeschylus, which entertained him for a good three miles; riding his clerk's horse, which had such a



propensity for kneeling that one would have thought that it had been his trade as well as his master's : happily the parson's legs when he was riding this curious steed almost touched the ground, so that he experienced little inconvenience from the animal's antics. There he stands, snapping his fingers over his head, terribly perturbed at the inhuman words of a landlord, knocking down his host, and covered with blood as the result of the encounter. People constantly take advantage of his simplicity. He believes everyone is as honest and guileless as himself, and is terribly shocked when he finds out his mistake. Brave he is as he wields his crabstick or doubles his fist to protect an innocent victim. How he rejoices in the happiness of others ! He teaches and exhorts. He is a spiritual Don Quixote, daring all dangers for the cause of right and justice, and of God ; and though he sometimes gets into strange and ridiculous situations, though he has many foibles and extravagances, we love him all the more for his eccentricities, and agree with Joseph that he is " the best man in the world."

Parson Barnabas, who appears in the same novel, is of a different type. He is not an unworthy cleric, though he has many weaknesses and much vanity. He comes at once when sent for to minister to poor Joseph lying sick at an inn, but he does not fail to drink a cup of tea with the landlady and a bowl of punch with the landlord before he performs his perfunctory ministrations to Joseph. After the youth had told Barnabas that he had repented of his faults the parson proceeded to prayer with all the expedition he was master of, as some company

were then waiting for him in the parlour, where the ingredients for punch were all in readiness, but no one could squeeze the oranges until he came. He was a very vain creature, very dictatorial and mightily impressed with his dignity and importance; he prides himself on his knowledge of the law and on the excellence of his sermons; three bishops had said that they were the best that ever were written, and were even better than Tillotson's discourses, though he was a good writer and said things very well. This Parson Barnabas is not a very pleasant person. His type is not quite extinct, and clerical vanity with regard to sermon-writing has survived.

A far different type is sketched in the person of Parson Trulliber, "whom Adams found stript to his waistcoat, with an apron on and a pail in his hands, just come from serving his hogs; for Mr. Trulliber was a parson on Sundays, but all the other six days might be more properly called a farmer. He occupied a small piece of land of his own, besides which he rented a considerable deal more. His wife milked his cows, managed his dairy and followed the market with butter and eggs. The hogs fell chiefly to his care, which he carefully waited on at home and attended to fairs, on which occasion he was liable to many jokes, his own size being with much ale rendered little inferior to the beasts he sold. His voice was loud and hoarse and his accent extremely broad. To complete the whole he had a stateliness in his gait when he walked not unlike that of a goose, only he stalked slower."

Such was the outward appearance of this coarse clerical type. His inner man corresponded with the



outward, and he was a striking contrast to the amiable, simple and devout Adams. The readers of Fielding will remember that Parson Adams needed a few shillings to pay his score at an inn and went to borrow it from Trulliber, who imagined that he was come to buy hogs, and was grievously disappointed when at last the nature of his visitor's errand was disclosed to this churlish and ill-mannered wretch. Trulliber scornfully refuses to lay up treasure in heaven by lending Adams seven shillings, accuses him of being a robber, an impostor, a vagabond, threatens him with violence and behaves like a boor. There is a charming contrast between the simple Christianity of the one and the vulgar selfishness of the other. Adams was right in discharging his parting shot at the hog-keeper when he said he was sorry to see such men in Orders.

Fielding's novel 'Amelia' reveals another type of excellent clergyman in the person of Dr. Harrison, who is described by one of the characters in the story as "one of the best men in the world, and an honour to the sacred order to which he belongs." He has a strong and singular way of expressing himself on all occasions, especially when he is affected with anything. He is a scholar and a gentleman, broad-minded and tolerant, and full of sound common sense and ripe experience. He scorns the idea that "Christianity is a matter of theory and not a rule for our practice." Bravely does he defend the innocent from the attacks of rakes and snobs. Half his fortune he has given away in charity or been defrauded of by the plausible tales of insidious friends. It is splendid to hear him

thundering away at the vices to be shunned by the clergy—avarice, ambition and pride—dinning into the ears of a young clerical cub, who is a pattern of uppishness, the folly of that “saucy passion, pride.” He is the best of comforters, and owing to his excessive good nature, his keen penetration into the human mind and his great experience he is wonderfully proficient. He has a very homely house, adorned with no luxuries save books and the prints of Mr. Hogarth, whom he calls a moral satirist. All his parishioners, whom he treats as his children, regard him as their common father. Once a week he constantly visits every house in the parish, examines, commends and rebukes, as he finds occasion. A very model parson, a very highly-finished portrait of an excellent parish priest, “well worthy of the cloth he wore, and that is, I think, the highest character a man can obtain.”

Fielding's ‘Tom Jones’ also has some clerics, not so lovable and attractive as Adams and Harrison, but worthy men in their way. There is Parson Thwackum, the clerical pedagogue, a learned, honest and a worthy man, though blest with a temper; and Parson Supple, who, as his name implies, yields to the arbitrary tyranny of his brutal squire and patron, and, except on one memorable occasion, dares not to denounce the violent way of the passionate old man or to resist his intolerable tyranny. The writer's sketches of these clerics of the old school are extremely valuable, and help us to realise the kind of men who held livings about the middle of the eighteenth century, and who, with few exceptions, were worthy of their sacred calling.

What a beautiful character has the vicar whom Goldsmith places in his 'Deserted Village'! It is said that the original of this charming portrait was the poet's father, the Rev. Charles Goldsmith. The virtues of his brother Henry were probably present in his mind to complete the delineation.

"A man he was to all the country dear,  
And passing rich with forty pounds a year;  
Remote from towns he ran his godly race,  
Nor e'er had changed, nor wish'd to change his place:  
Unskilful he to fawn, or seek for power,  
By doctrines fashioned to the varying hour:  
Far other aims his heart had learn'd to prize,  
More bent to raise the wretched than to rise.

"At church, with meek and unaffected grace,  
His looks adorned the venerable place;  
Truth from his lips prevail'd with double sway,  
And fools, who came to scoff, remain'd to pray.  
The service past, around the pious man,  
With steady zeal each honest rustic ran;  
E'en children follow'd, with endearing wile,  
And pluck'd his gown to share the good man's smile."

The delightful sketch of this worthy vicar has a companion portrait drawn by the same artist in the 'Vicar of Wakefield.' The vicar does not describe himself, but his character is revealed throughout the book. The old-fashioned parsonage is drawn by a faithful hand. The vicar says: "Our little habitation was situated at the foot of a sloping hill, sheltered with a beautiful underwood behind and a prattling river before; on one side a meadow, on the other a green. My farm consisted of about twenty acres of excellent land, having given a

hundred pounds for my predecessor's goodwill. Nothing could exceed the neatness of my little enclosures, the elms and hedgerows appearing with inexpressible beauty. My house consisted of but one storey, and was covered with thatch, which gave it an air of great snugness; the walls on the inside were nicely whitewashed, and my daughters undertook to adorn them with pictures of their own designing. Though the same room served us for parlour and kitchen, that only made it the warmer. Besides, as it was kept with the utmost neatness—the dishes, plates, coppers being well scoured, and all disposed in bright rows on the shelves—the eye was agreeably relieved, and did not want richer furniture. There were three other apartments—one for my wife and me, another for our two daughters, within our own, and the third with two beds for the rest of the children."

There were many such homely parsonages in the eighteenth century. Most of them have disappeared and given place to more imposing buildings. In this little house the vicar and his family passed their frugal life, rising with the sun, and in the evening assembling around a neat hearth and pleasant fire. "Nor were we without guests; sometimes Father Flamborough, our talkative neighbour, and often the blind piper would pay us a visit and taste our gooseberry wine, for the making of which we had lost neither the receipt nor the reputation. These harmless people had several ways of being good company; while one played the other would sing some soothing ballad—'Johnny Armstrong's Last Good-Night,' or 'The Cruelty of Barbara

Allen.' The night was concluded in the manner we began the morning, by the youngest boys being appointed to read the lessons of the day; and he that read loudest, distinctest, and best was to have an halfpenny to put into the poor's box."

Dr. Primrose, in the days of his poverty, like most of his contemporaries, differed little in social standing from the farmers amongst whom he dwelt. He himself went to the fair to sell his colt, and thought it not derogatory to his position to have a friendly glass with the purchasers over the transaction at an inn. His relations with his people were most friendly, and he was intensely beloved by his flock. When he arrived the whole neighbourhood came out to meet him dressed in their finest clothes, and preceded by a pipe and tabor. A feast was provided, and "what the conversation wanted in wit was made up in laughter." And when dire troubles came, and the sheriff's officers were taking the poor vicar to a debtor's prison, his people came gallantly to the rescue, and would have half-killed the officers if the kind vicar had not prevented them.

But we must leave this much-wronged parson and discover other worthies of the profession. Their names are legion, and we can only take some of the most important who have appeared in literature. George Crabbe, a parson himself, was not blind to some of the weaknesses of his clerical neighbours, and though he tells us that he hated "the satiric muse," could not avoid depicting the foibles of human nature. Here is his portrait of a country parson, a cringing clerie who led a blameless life but was entirely without character :

“ Our Priest was cheerful, and in season gay,  
His frequent visits seldom fail'd to please ;  
Easy himself, he sought his neighbour's ease.

“ Few now remember when the mild young man  
Ruddy and fair, his Sunday task began.  
Simple he was and loved the simple truth,  
Yet had some useful cunning from his youth ;  
A cunning never to dishonour lent,  
And rather for defence than conquest meant ;  
'Twas fear of power, with some desire to rise,  
But not enough to make him enemies ;  
He never aim'd to please ; and to offend  
Was ever cautious ; for he sought a friend.  
Fiddling and fishing were his arts ; at times  
He alter'd sermons, and he aim'd at rhymes ;  
And his fair friends, not yet intent on cards,  
Oft he amused with riddles and charades.  
Mild were his doctrines, and not one discourse  
But gained in softness what it lost in force :  
Kind his opinions ; he would not receive  
An ill report, nor evil act believe.”

This gentle priest preached mild platitudes with unctuous amiability. He had “ a soft, soothing look, which, like his visits, never failed to please.” Once he narrowly escaped wedlock, wooing with faint ardour a maid whose mother, a widow, thought that perhaps his heart was set on the elder lady.

“ Smiling he came, he smiled when he withdrew,  
And paid the same attention to the two ;  
Meeting and parting without joy or pain,  
He seemed to come that he might go again.”

The maid preferred a more ardent lover, and the vicar had to content himself with “ ancient females,”



to whom he was gravely courteous, presented flowers from his garden with "moral compliment," and with whom he gossiped on local happenings. His views upon ecclesiastical matters were characterised by his accustomed calmness, dreading all innovations, and the daring conduct of his younger brethren who wore a surplice "lacking hood and band," and preferred the "New Version" of the Psalms of David to the old Sternhold and Hopkins. But let the poet himself describe him :

"Though mild benevolence our Priest possess'd,  
'Twas but by wishes or by words expressed.  
Circles in water, as they wider flow,  
The less conspicuous in their progress grow,  
And when at last they touch upon the shore,  
Distinction ceases, and they're viewed no more.  
His love, like the last circle, all embraced,  
But with effect that never could be traced.  
Now rests our Vicar. They who knew him best  
Proclaim his life t' have been entirely—rest.  
The rich approved,—of them in awe he stood ;  
The poor admired,—they all believed him good ;  
The old and serious of his habits spoke ;  
The frank and youthful loved his pleasant joke ;  
Mothers approved a safe, contented guest,  
And daughters one who backed each small request.  
In him his flock found nothing to condemn ;  
Him sectaries liked,—he never troubled them ;  
No trifles fail'd his yielding mind to please,  
And all his passions sunk in early ease ;  
Not one so old has left this world of sin,  
More like the being that he entered in."

The mention of a surplice reminds one of the ancient controversy about parsonic vestments, of the absurd disputes between black gown and surplice,



of the serious riots at Exeter when Dr. Coleridge, vicar of Thornton, was mobbed after preaching at St. Sidwell's, and Francis Courtenay was assaulted by a yelling crowd of 2000 savages, who covered him with filth and rotten eggs, which the police could scarcely ward off. He died prematurely in consequence. Tom Hood poured scorn on these surplice riots :

“ A very pretty public stir,  
Is making down at Exeter,  
About the surplice fashion,  
And many bitter words and rude,  
Are interchanged about the feud,  
And much unchristian passion.

“ For me I neither know nor care,  
Whether a parson ought to wear,  
A black dress or a white one,  
Plagued with a trouble of mine own,  
A wife who preaches in her gown  
And lectures in her night one.”

Crabbe's parson is not a very flattering sketch. Some of the type may still be seen, and are accounted good, harmless folk, and attain to preferment and the approval of prelates on account of the “safeness” of their views and the subserviousness of their manners, though perhaps they may not quite exhibit the surpassing excellences of Crabbe's vicar. A great modern writer, Mr. Baring-Gould, in one of his novels, ‘Red-Spider,’ sketched another of these amiable clerics, who “never in the pulpit insisted on a doctrine lest he should offend a Dissenter, nor on a duty lest he should make a Churchman uneasy.”

Crabbe tells us of other parsons in his Parish Register, who repose in their peaceful tombs. There was good Master Addle, who looked very dignified and noble, adorned with college gown and parish hood, filling well his sevenfold surplice. When he had mounted the pulpit he sat down to meditate, doubtless, and there —

“He sat and seem’d as in his study’s chair,  
For while the anthem swell’d, and when it ceased,  
Th’ expecting people view’d their slumbering priest.”

Then there was Parson Peele, skilful at shearing his flock; Doctor Grandspear, a very charitable soul; and then a raving young Methodistical Evangelical, who ranted and startled the villagers:

“Loud grew his voice, to threat’ning swell’d his look;  
Above, below, on either side he gazed.  
No more he read his preachments pure and plain,  
But launch’d outright, and rose and sank again.  
At times he smiled in scorn, at times he wept.”

He told them much of “conviction coming like lightning,” of “guests of grace”; but his fervent zeal was too great for his feeble body. Upon his death-bed he raves against all the good deeds which he had done. He exclaims:

“The good I’ve wrought still rankles in my mind;  
My Alms-deeds all, and every deed I’ve done;  
My moral-rags defile me every one.”

The poet thus gently satirises the extreme ideas of this enthusiastic young cleric, who would have nought but justification by faith without its fruit, good works. He contrasts the sleepy Parson Addle

with this fiery preacher's zeal, the two extremes between which the clergy of the eighteenth century oscillated, and Crabbe prefers the golden mean which he himself professed to hold.

George Eliot's descriptions of clerical types are well known. How well does she describe the quaint old church of Shepperton and its primitive services, the village orchestra with its bassoon, two key-bugles, a carpenter understood to have an amazing power of singing "counter," two lesser musical lights, and the clerk! The anthem was the great attraction, in which the key-bugles always ran away at a great pace, while the bassoon every now and then boomed a flying shot after them. But our attention is mainly concerned with the parsons who officiated at Shepperton. There was Mr. Gilfil, an excellent old gentleman, who smoked very long pipes and preached very short sermons. A plain, good-hearted man, he did not shine in the more spiritual functions of this office. He had a large heap of short sermons, rather yellow and worn at the edges. Two of these he used every Sunday without much trouble in selecting them, and one he preached at Shepperton and the other at Knebley in the afternoon where he rode on horseback, and forgot to remove his spurs. The farmers would as soon have thought of criticising the moon as their pastor. He belonged to the course of nature, like markets and toll-gates and dirty bank-notes. He was an immense favourite with these farmers, knew all about the breeds of cows and horses, was easy and pleasant with his bucolic neighbours, and was respected by them as a gentleman and a clergyman. His sermons

inculcated morality. No difficult doctrines, no attempts to raise the spiritual nature, no unfolding of the Life of God Incarnate or of the Spirit's gracious dower could be found therein. Do right, and it will be better for you ; do wrong, and you will suffer—that seems to have been their essence. Mr. Gilfil was no boor in society, in spite of his vernacular talk with his rustic and homely manners, but was a welcome guest at some of the best houses in the neighbourhood, where he behaved with courtly ways and graceful gallantry. How well does the brilliant writer tell his pathetic love story, which roused his soul when life was young and his heart full of passion and tenderness ! And we bid a tender farewell to the grey-haired man who filled his pocket with sugar-plums for the little children, whose most biting words were directed against the evil doing of the rich man, and who, with all his social pipes and slipshod talk, never sank below the highest level of his parishioners' respect.

Poor, patient Amos Barton, curate of Shepperton, is a different type. How he lived on eighty pounds a year and brought up six children was one of the mysteries of the world—a mystery that still requires solving in many clerical households. Eighty pounds a year is one pound ten shillings and eightpence a week. A mechanic, a carpenter, a cabman, a collier would strike if he received such wages. But the parson does not strike : he only endures his woes. Sympathetic eyes cannot read undimmed the troubled story of Amos Barton's career and that of his poor, brave wife. Amos is no hero ; a little fussy man, not very brilliant, not quite a gentleman, his preach-

ing "like a Belgian railway-horn which shows praiseworthy intentions inadequately fulfilled"; but he was very honest and faithful, eager and zealous in the discharge of his duties, and the pathos of his heartrending troubles endears him to us and makes us forget his peculiarities and his defects.

The late Poet-Laureate did not forget to draw a picture of parsons. He tells in his "Maud" of the fashionable curate and his mode of rendering the service :

"She came to the village church,  
And sat by a pillar alone.

"And suddenly, sweetly, my heart beat stronger  
And thicker, until I heard no longer  
The snowy-banded dilettante  
Delicate-handed Priest intone."

But his portrait in "The May Queen" is painted in different colours, and is one of the finest in literature :

"But that good man, the clergyman, has told me words of  
peace ;  
O blessings on his kindly voice and on his silver hair !  
And blessings on his whole life long, until he meets me  
there !  
O blessings on his kindly heart, and on his silver head—  
A thousand times I blessed him as he knelt beside my bed.  
He taught me all the mercy, for he showed me all the sin ;  
Now, tho' my lamp was lighted late, there's *One* will let  
me in."

Jane Austen's parsons lack not the criticisms of a skilled and caustic pen, and are in a certain way

delicious. One might almost suspect in the fair lady's invective or gentle sarcasm the result of wounded feelings or blighted affections. In 'Pride and Prejudice' there is the delightful caricature of a rector, Mr. Collins, who discourses charmingly on his duties as a parson—including having "attentive and conciliating manners towards everybody, especially towards those to whom he owes his preferment." No wonder Mr. Bennett whispered to Lady Lucas that he was a remarkably clever, good kind of young man. And then there is that delicious courtship scene when Mr. Collins woos Miss Elizabeth, and expounds to her his reasons for marrying—to set the example of matrimony in his parish, to add to his own happiness, and the particular advice of the noble lady his patroness. He reminds her that all her fortune will be £1000 in 4 per cent., but that he is good enough to waive all such matters of money, and offers her his heart and hand. It is all delightful comedy, and the conduct of Mr. Elton in 'Emma' is no less amusing, and the authoress's opinion of a clergyman taking holy orders because he had a fat family living in prospect is expressed by Miss Crawford's conversation with Edmund Bartram in Mansfield Park. She thinks that a clergyman has nothing to do but to eat, drink and grow fat, to be slovenly and selfish, read the newspaper, watch the weather and quarrel with his wife. His curate does all the work, and the business of his own life is to dine. And there is much else to the same effect. Was it a case of unrequited affection, or a fair criticism of the sort of parsons who flourished in Miss Austen's locality? I must leave



that problem for the solution of the curious in such matters.

The novels of Anthony Trollope bristle with parsons. 'Barchester Towers' is too well known to need a reference. They are of all sorts and kinds. The hen-pecked bishop with the immortal Mr. Cromlin, the learned Mr. Arabin, Dr. Grantley, Dean, Canon, who, instead of performing his duties, lingered on the shores of the Lake of Como adding to his unique collections of butterflies; the poor parson Quiverful with his large family; the wretched Slope, the unmasked hypocrite, and then the delightful precentor, Harding, who is left in the hands of the reader, not as a hero, not as a man to be admired and talked of, not as a man who should be toasted at public dinners and spoken of with conventional absurdity as a perfect divine, but as a good man without guile, believing humbly in the religion which he had striven to teach, and guided by the precepts which he had striven to learn.

The curate has not escaped the attention of literary men. His activities in older days when he had charge of three or four parishes, and rode from village to village—the clerk looking out for him and beginning to toll the bell when he saw the curate coming, were amazing. Dean Swift in his verses set forth the energies of his colleague, Robert Hewit, in the following lines:

“I marched three miles through scorching sand,  
With zeal in heart and notes in hand;  
I rode four more to Great St. Mary,  
Using four legs when two were weary.

To three fair virgins I did tie men  
 In the close bands of pleasing Hymen ;  
 I dipped two babes in holy water,  
 And purified their mothers after.  
 Within an hour and eke a half  
 I preached three congregations deaf,  
 Which, thundering out with lungs long-winded,  
 I chopped so fast that few were minded.  
 My emblem the laborious sun,  
 Saw all these mighty labours done  
 Before one race of his was run.  
 All this performed by Robert Hewit ;  
 What mortal else could e'er go through it ? ”

Mr. Harold Begbie sings his praises in no slender  
 or false tones when he ranks him among the  
 “common heroes” who fights a good fight against  
 evil. He sings :

“Where the footlights flame not, where Life goes  
     maimed and dumb,  
 He keeps a candle burning in dog-hole and in slum ;  
 And in the noisome garret, beside the squalid bed,  
 His fingers smooth the pillow for the dying docker’s  
     head.

“He goes where brave men falter, he pleads where law  
     is not,  
 He fills the mouths of orphans, he turns the drunken  
     sot ;  
 His coat is green and threadbare, his cheeks are worn  
     and thin—  
 Fine linen irks their shoulders who war with Crime  
     and Sin.

“Not a booby, not a noodle, not a simpleton and  
     ninny—

Happy little curate, with your honest heart uncowed ;

Never yet did knave or noddie take the throat of vice and shoddy,

Fighting for redemption where the Devil's laugh is loud."

He does not belong to the type of the old-fashioned padre who was described as six days invisible and the seventh incomprehensible.

As a collector of old-fashioned books I may call your attention to two, which are full of information with regard to the parsons of the eighteenth and last century, and lack not interest. One is the 'Velvet Cushion,' by the Rev. J. W. Cunningham, Vicar of Harrow (Mr. Baring-Gould lent me his copy, seventh edition, 1815). The 'Velvet Cushion' tells the story of its adventures from the time when it first saw the light in the shop of an upholsterer in Fleet Street in the days of Queen Mary to its final resting-place in a small parish church on the shores of one of the most picturesque lakes in Westmorland. It had been swept by the tunic of a Pope's nuncio, had descended to the pulpit of one of the first Puritans, had been expelled by some of the Cromwellites as an impious adjunct to the simplicity of primitive worship, had risen again with the rising fortunes of the monarchy, and had finally climbed the mountains of Westmorland to spend the years of its grand climacteric in the great and unambitious pulpit of the village church. It had heard the best preachers of three centuries and tells its story of them. Of a large proportion no very

interesting records remain. Many were persons of decent, cold, correct manners, varying slightly in zeal, doctrinal exactness, benevolence, industry and talent. They were men who were too apt to spring up in the bosom of old and prosperous establishments, whose highest praise is that they do no harm. The 'Velvet Cushion' is none too flattering.

I am comforted in turning over the pages of another old book written a century later. It is called the 'Owlet of Owlstone Edge,' by F. E. Paget (third edition, 1857). It is a charming book. The Owlet looks down the chimneys of many a homely rectory and records what he sees there. His interest is mainly concerned with parsons' wives, but incidentally he tells us much about their husbands. He liked not a parson with gun in hand, who disturbed his slumber in the ivy-clad tower of a church, whom he knew to be :

" A stranger to the poor,  
Rare at his home and never at his books."

But he came to the comforting conclusion that taking them all in all the parsons were the best and the most devoted priesthood on the face of the earth, the most blameless in their lives, the most kind and generous, the most conscientious, the most thoroughly imbued with the truth of what they teach, not the least learned nor the least painstaking.

Well, that seems to be fairly satisfactory. I should like to tell you what the Owlet says about the ladies, but there is no time for that.

In 'Cranford,' Mrs. Gaskell depicted a nice old clergyman, the father of Miss Matty, Rector of Cranford, whose only title to fame was that he preached a sermon before a judge at the Assizes. This was printed by request, and there were great cogitations as to who should have the honour of printing it. The rector had to take several journeys to London to see it through the press. He adopted a quite Ciceronic style of writing in consequence, and had his portrait painted with a large wig and holding in his hand the precious sermon.

Modern authors have not disdained to bring the clergy frequently into their books. Stanley Weyman has published a very pretty story called the 'New Rector,' and my friend "Morice Gerard" wrote the story of a very modern parson in 'The New Order,' in the course of which he describes the wife of a bishop, "Lady Mary," an aristocrat by birth and early education, who had striven for years to put on democratic garments, which, fitting none too well, seemed to have been constructed for someone else. Mr. Baring-Gould, whose literary record is so amazing, wrote a novel on the iniquitous Parson Froude, the hunting, bruising parson, who appears in 'The Maid of Sker.' I should like to have shown to you that admirable portrait of an old-time parson drawn by the inimitable pen of Winthrop Mackworth Praed, but time forbids.

In conclusion, as a parson, perhaps I may be allowed to express the hope that we of the present age may be able to maintain the reputation which Thomas Fuller states the clergy of England gained in former times, who (so he wrote) "for their living,

preaching and writing, have been the main champions of truth against error, of learning against ignorance, of piety against profaneness, of religion against superstition, of unity and order against faction and confusion, verifying the judicious observation of foreigners :

‘ CLERUS BRITANNIAE GLORIA MUNDI.’ ”



# AN ALL-EMBRACING GENIUS: LEONARDO DA VINCI.

BY ANTONIO CIPPICO, R.S.L.

Professor of London University.

[Read October 22nd, 1919.]

THERE are very few human individuals, only half a dozen perhaps, or not more than four, who have been chosen by God worthily to become the highest exponents of our Western civilisation. Demi-gods, placed by their genius on a level far above the loftiest summits attained by humanity, collectively or individually, in its hard and toilsome daily aspiration towards some sort of evolution, they live for ever in an atmosphere which is nearer to that crystalline heaven (*cielo cristallino*) that was imagined and coloured by Dante than to the petty and limited human battle which is our incessant and unavoidable struggle for life.

Their bodies hardly vanished from earthly existence before legend got hold of them, and, violently snatching them from the sepulchre of history, enveloped them with the iridescent veils of myth. Homer, the ἀοιδός who sang his grave songs at the dawn of our Mediterranean civilisation, was a vaguer personality even than a myth at the time of his human life—if he ever existed: we know more, it would seem, about the life and the frolics of the

singing mermaids surrounding the ship of Odysseus than about the birth, the life and the death of this Great Shadow which, from the threshold between Asia and Europe, still haunts our unquenched longings for dream-woven knowledge. Without Homer neither Aeschylus nor Pindar would mean much to us ; without him neither the Athena Parthenos of the Acropolis nor the motherly figure of the Cnidian Demeter would have added any new charm to our taste : both Plato and Parmenides would have uttered quite different words to us, Virgil's poem would have dealt with some other subject, and all we know of the Greek greatness, on which Rome based its own greatness, and gave its laws to the contemporary and future humanity, would have followed a different path, would have evolved with a different rhythm.

The same things could be said of Dante and of Shakespeare, creators and moulders of worlds. Without attempting to measure the immediate or far-reaching effects of their appearance among us, without even tracing the ephemeral accidents and the dates of their human existence, we cannot consider them now but in the light of their legend. Their cradles and their biers are out of our sight long since. It little matters if their ashes enrich the sacred soil of Ravenna and Stratford-on-Avon. As the corpse of Romulus, in the corner of the Forum, wrapped in flames, became the god Jupiter Quirinus, the bodies of the two greatest poets that modern times gave birth to have completely vanished from our earth, and have been transhumanated and translated to the azure top of heaven. We do not

possess a single manuscript line from their own hands. But for the few and doubtful signatures of the god who gave life to Hamlet, every material trace of their writing has disappeared. It belongs to myth, just as the manuscripts of the poet of the Lakedaemonian Helen and of Ithakian Odysseus.

The same lot practically befell the fourth representative genius of our civilisation, Leonardo da Vinci. His bones are not to be found any more, after four centuries only, in the church of St. Florentin, which was annexed to the Castle of Cloux at Amboise. A skeleton which was found on the crypt of the Choir by M. Henri Houssaye less than sixty years ago (August 20th, 1863), with his skull reposing on a hand, and which for its measure (five foot five) was considered to be perhaps that of the painter of the "Gioconda," has disappeared. Although there still are in the world the much-disputed series of some of his pictures, and the scattered seven thousand pages of his own writings and drawings, the same atmosphere of legend enshrouding the three representative geniuses just mentioned surrounds the man whose life and thought and work are, if possible, even more mysterious than the life and thought and work of his three peers.

Leonardo, the love-child of Ser Piero d'Antonio da Vinci, and of Caterina, the peasant girl "of good blood," as she is recorded by the "Anonimo Gaddiano," was throughout his life a constant object of wonder and admiration to his teachers and disciples, to his friends and enemies, from Verocchio to Andrea

Salaino, from Ludovico il Moro to the German Giovanni degli Specchi. Vasari, who, writing half a century only after his death, could not avoid handing down to us a more subtle sketch of his already legendary portrait, one of the finest of his "Vite," mentions his "beauty of body never to be sufficiently extolled" and the "endless grace" which was in all his actions. Besides great physical force "joined to dexterity, spirit and courage, ever royal and magnanimous," his genius was of such a kind "that to whatever difficult things he turned his mind, he solved them with ease."

What is "grace," but a movement, produced with ease, in which effort does not appear? If strength and beauty are Leonardo's chief physical and mental characteristics, grace and music are the elementary qualities of every thought or line or colour he fixed on paper, on a canvas, or on a wall. His mother or nurse was probably a Tuscan sister of the Greek Charities. Take any of the pictures or drawings, attributed even after much discussion to him, and before practically *seeing* and understanding them, you will be captured by that "ease" of style which strips the objects of their corporeal clumsiness, lifts them as on hidden wings into the air, surrounds them with a halo of harmony, and produces the charm of grace.

This main force of Leonardo's mental attitude and, if it could be so called, technical achievement, is chiefly derived from his instinctive inclination towards mystery. What is mystery but the only truth? Leonardo was one of those, to quote Théophile Gautier, "*pour qui le monde visible existe.*"

The visible world, however, began for him only on the vague and tremulous edge of the horizon which surrounds the scene of this "*Teatro dell' Apparenza*," in which we are the blind actors.

This man, who, according to the description of Lomazzo, "*pareva la vera nobiltà dello studio, quale fu, altre volte, il druido Ermete e l'antico Prometeo*" (seemed the true dignity of study, as once the druid Hermes and the ancient Prometheus); this man, whose "divine beauty" was such as to "*rasserenare ogni animo mesto*" (brighten every sad soul), delighted in solitude. When still adolescent, in the studio of Verocchio, where he was surrounded by the most exquisite and delicate pictures, marbles, bronzes, tapestry and jewels which ancient and contemporary art had wrought, he soon neglected the friendship of his inferior colleagues, of Perugino, Botticelli, Lorenzo di Credi, and Filippino Lippi. All these talented companions of his, though great draughtsmen, were but mirrors of Nature. "*Il pittore che ritrae per pratica e giudizio di occhio, senza ragione, è come lo specchio, che in sè imita tutte le a sè contrapposte cose, senza cognizion d'esse.*" (The painter who portrays things through sheer practice and judgment of eye, without reason, is like the mirror which imitates in itself all things opposed to it, without any knowledge of the same.)

He preferred, therefore, his solitude. "*Se tu sarai solo, tu sarai tutto tuo, e se sarai accompagnato da un solo compagno, sarai mezzo tuo.*" (If you be alone, you shall wholly belong to yourself, and if only one companion be with you, you will

belong only half to yourself.) He began his lonely pilgrimage through life, passing through towns and villages, valleys and mountains, with the eyes of his mind wide open and with every feeling sharpened, in order to discover “l'anima delle cose” (the soul of things), which lies hidden behind the deceitful veil of appearance. Sometimes he unexpectedly arrives at a sea-shore, or the opening of a large grotto, where he sits down, “alquanto stupefatto e ignorante di tal cosa” (somewhat surprised and ignorant of such a thing), with his tired left hand leaning on the knee, and covering his eyes with the right (“con la destra mi feci tenebra alle abbassate e chiuse ciglia”). He listens to the strange symphony of the waves, measures the various tones and voices of the surging sea against the rocks, and his mind roves among a crowd of new and still undiscovered laws (*necessità*), which later on he will collect in some of his treatises on sound.

We find Leonardo in the same attitude of prolonged rest and meditation before his yet unfinished fresco of “La Cena” in Santa Maria delle Grazie at Milan, and a few years after in the Sala del Papa, in Santa Maria Novella at Florence, in front of his cartoon of the “Battle of Anghiari.” The friars of the Milanese convent of Saint Dominic were not at all pleased with such unconcluding laziness on the part of the painter; the Prior of that place—as Vasari tells us—urged Leonardo, in a most importunate way, to finish the work, it seeming strange to him that the painter should sometimes stand half a day at a time, lost in thought; and he would have had him go on with his work as if he were digging in a



garden, without ever stopping his brush. The Prior complained of it, therefore, to the Duke of Milan, who after sending for Leonardo urged him, but only half-heartedly, to finish the work. We all know the amusing answer of the Florentine Master, when "Arguing with him much about art he made him understand how men of lofty genius sometimes produce the most when they work the least; seeking out inventions with the mind, and forming those perfect ideas, which the hands afterwards express and portray from the images already conceived in the brain." And he added that there were still wanting two heads for him to paint: that of Christ, which he was not willing to seek on earth, and that of Judas. He would try to find a model for the latter! Should he, however, not find it among the most ferocious criminals of the Duchy, he would willingly draw the face of the importunate Prior.

This instinctive tendency to lose himself in long meditation on the edge of the mystery, besides alienating from him many contemporary admirers, considerably added to the network of calumny which has tended to dim, until recent times, his glory. He was, and is still, accused of having begun many things, and never finished any of them. The fact is that, instead of being lazy, his most active mind was too full of aspirations: the wish ever to seek out excellence upon excellence—to quote Vasari once more—and perfection upon perfection was the cause of it: "*Tal che l'opera fosse ritardata dal desio*," as our poet Petrarch said.

He used, as Pope Leo sarcastically remarked,

to begin by thinking about the end before the beginning of the work.

Notwithstanding this drawback, however, we can clearly see that, with the exception of a few works, as the equestrian statue of Francesco Sforza, and the fresco of the Salone del Cronaca (dei Cinquecento) in the Palazzo della Signoria, which was commissioned to him by public decree, upon the suggestion of Niccolò Machiavelli to the Gonfalonier Piero Soderini, he seems to have faithfully executed everything he was asked and had promised to accomplish. We know something, although little enough indeed, of the tragic story of the equestrian statue of the father of Ludovico il Moro. The modelling of this statue occupied sixteen consecutive years, if we are to believe Saba da Castiglione (Venice, 1554). If Leonardo, as seems certain, had finished the great model, but was confronted, for a moment at least, by the impossibility of casting it, why should we throw all the blame on the Master, and under-estimate the difficulties of finding in Milan a suitable place in which to cast it in bronze? When the French troops of Louis the Twelfth entered Milan in 1499, the magnificent work "became a target for Gascon archers." We find no mention of it after September, 1501, except for a little model in wax, which appears still to have existed somewhere in Europe some scores of years after Leonardo's death.

What happened to the statue in clay, and to this little model of the same? Nothing is known, and Francesco Sforza has entered triumphally, on his wonderful horse, into the mysterious legend, which

is the life of our Master. We can find some recollections of his monument in the many sketches of it Leonardo has left us, and more especially in the precious treatise of "The Anatomy of the Horse," which is still waiting, as nearly all his great studies, to be published. If we are not *blind*, however, we can *dream* even better of that amazing horse and of that warrior, looking at the monument of Bartolomeo Colleoni in Venice, which, although the work of Verocchio and Leopardi, seems to be the most powerful inspiration or reflection of the work of him who was the greatest among Verocchio's disciples.

The same accidental and material obstacles which caused the ruin of the Sforza monument seem to have hindered the execution of the great fresco of the "Battle of Anghiari." It was not Leonardo's fault if the story of Niccolò Piccinino, Captain of the Duke Filippo of Milan, is not illuminating even to-day the large wall, which, still fresh and damp in his time, was desecrated later by Vasari. The first time I entered the Sala dei Cinquecento I could not see Vasari's super-painted fresco. My eyes, gazing through it, saw only the scene of rage, hatred and revenge, "no less in the men than in the horses, among which two, with the fore-legs interlocked, are fighting as fiercely with their teeth, as he on horseback is fighting for the standard, which has been seized by a soldier." Leonardo's fresco and cartoon have both disappeared from our mortal eyes. But an art masterpiece never dies.

"Cosa bella mortal passa, e non d'arte,"

as Leonardo was pleased to repeat to himself so often.

Another work of his which will never die, although it has ever been more in the region of beyond, among the exquisite shadows of past beauty, than among living things belonging to living men, is the Milanese "Last Supper." The critics have too often divided Leonardo's achievements and life into two periods: first the thirty years of the Florentine preparation, and the seventeen years of the Florentine maturity, not to mention the twenty conclusive years of Leonardo's wanderings through Italy and at the Court of Francis the First. They are right, however, when they state the "Last Supper" to be the supreme climax of Leonardo's career—the turning-point of his art.

Time, the great devourer, seems to have helped Art in restoring the spiritual values of that astonishing masterpiece. Little matters it if the men surrounding the "unfinished" figure of Jesus are slowly vanishing into the damp wall. There is He, for ever, the most perfect representation of any century or art of the Son of God, ready for ever to depart from us, and for ever present among us. His face is circumfused by that melancholy quietude, which is more celestial than earthly. His lips have just uttered the words, "I am going where you cannot follow Me."

Modern critics have done their best to rob Leonardo of most of his paintings. As every generation of critics does unavoidably contradict the preceding one, let us hope there will be a timely

revulsion—and there are some signs of it already—against such an inexplicable indictment. Even through the golden threads of the legend, we are able with some certainty to trace about fifteen pictures Leonardo has most surely left to us. It is useless to try to find the style or technique of “La Gioconda” in his earlier Florentine or Milanese works. Both life and art meant to Leonardo a hard and daily experience, perpetual changes, and constant progress. To state, as was often done, that four works only (the “Adorazione dei Magi” of the Uffizi, the “San Gerolamo” of the Vatican, the “Last Supper” and the “Gioconda”) can be genuinely attributed to the Master, is to calumniate most shamefully the glory of one who has been among the most productive and active geniuses of humanity.

Not to mention here the angel Leonardo, as a boy of fourteen or fifteen, painted in Verocchio’s “Baptism of Christ,” although he seems already to belong to the angelical family the Master has portrayed in his later works, both pictures and drawings, I am inclined to think, for my own intimate pleasure, that the Virgin at least of the Uffizi “Annunciazione,” which was painted very likely in 1478—nine years after Leonardo had left Verocchio’s *bottega*—is a relation of the “Ginevra Benci,” of the Liechtenstein Gallery in Vienna, with her solemn appearance against the dark branches of juniper, by which her name is symbolised. The portrait was probably painted in Florence between the years 1478 and 1480. I do not disdain, on the other hand, for the reason mentioned above, earnestly to consider as works of the same painter the “Musicista

of the Ambrosiana" (Milan, 1482), the much-discussed portrait of the young mistress of Ludovico il Moro, the beautiful "Cecilia Gallerani" (Milan, 1483-1485), the portrait of the other mistress of his, "Lucrezia Crivelli" (Milan, 1495-1498), and the charcoal drawing of "Isabella d'Este" (Mantua, 1501); besides the exquisite strange and "modern" portrait of the "Lady with the Ferret," of the Cracow Gallery, which was probably painted soon after the portrait of "Cecilia."

The critic Giovanni Morelli and his followers, after discovering the able Milanese painter Ambrogio Preda (de' Predis), whose only certain work appears until now to be the very clever portrait of the Emperor Maximilian, which is in Vienna, have attributed to him (besides something to Boltraffio and to Cesare da Sesto) nearly all the above pictures, and many of the drawings which are proved to belong to Leonardo. These attributions are either wholly arbitrary, or based on some vague evidence of a touch of white light grazing the eye of the people portrayed in profile, or of hands with fingers detached. Trifles, which have nothing to do, indeed, with real art, and much less even with the emotion inspired by a work of art standing high above all pettiness of dates and attributions.

Let us admit, for instance, that certain of the above-mentioned pictures were executed by some of Leonardo's nearest pupils, and that he, as is too well known, very closely directed the work of each. "Altro non ha facto se non che dui suoi garzoni fano ritratti et lui alle volte in alcuno mette mano." Where is to be found, then, the strict limit of the



material execution of the disciple, and of the original suggestion and actual collaboration of the Master? And if it is so, are not our souls inclined to forget the hand of the pupil, in order only to admire the mind of the Master? When I happen to see the bronze figures of "St. John the Baptist between the Levite and the Pharisee," which stand above the north door of "il mio bel San Giovanni," the Florentine Baptistery, more than of their author Giovan Francesco Rustici I think of Leonardo, who was living with the former in Via dei Martelli while he was at work upon them (1507-1508), and who "at least aided Giovan Francesco with his counsel and good judgment." \*

Gold remains gold even in the most complex alloys. Any flower in May is the legitimate representative of spring. Genius reveals itself, even in the meanest surroundings. Leonardo's presence, notwithstanding the conflicting opinions of the critics, is felt, above everything else, in the works he inspired and directed.

If we were blindly to follow the admonishment and advice of those recent critics, we should not allow ourselves to be enraptured by the enigmatical fascination of both the Paris and the London "Madonna of the Rocks" or by the exquisite maternal enchantment of the "Sant'Anna." These two pictures, on the other hand, and the marvellous Burlington cartoon for the latter subject, are the links between the early juvenile and virile period of Leonardo's

\* Vasari, 'Vita di G. F. Rustici.'

art, and the grand final achievements of "La Gioconda" and "St. John the Baptist."

The "Sant' Anna," and more especially the cartoon of the Diploma Gallery, reveal the mysterious development of Leonardo's last period of art. There are three generations represented in them. The two mothers, the Virgin sitting on the lap of St. Anna, are both absorbed in contemplation, one of her daughter, the other of the Sacred Infant. There are two motherly loves in it, multiplied and fused into one. Maternal passion has never found a higher and more intense and delicate expression than in these two representations. In the calm, changing and complacent smile of the two female figures lies the secret source of the picture's fascination and of our delight. It is of the same nature and origin as the smile of many of Leonardo's creatures, angels, Madonnas and androgynes. Its ambiguity is the true shadow of mystery. Its implacable irony, more especially on "Monna Lisa's" lips, reflects the surrounding contrast of things—life and death, day and night, good and evil. Eyes thus smiling have seen through the veil which darkens the aspect and essence of truth to us. It little matters if only the Master should have gazed through them. Each of these features of enigmatical women or men represents both the burning passion and the hard-won experience of Leonardo. From the time when, as a youth, he used to cast small heads of smiling women, to the day "he retained those who played or sang, and continually jested" that they might make the Neapolitan Monna Lisa, wife of Francesco del Giocondo, continue merry, his art does seem to be

nothing but the conquest of an ever more enchanting and haunting and mysterious smile.

Leonardo's life is nothing but a long dialogue with Nature. He questioned, and Nature answered through the infinite variety of things: the stars and the earth, men and flowers, animals and metals, fire and water—instruments all of the great music of the Universe. He obstinately (*"con hostinato vigore"*) pursued the causes of movement, of heat, of light, of sound, of life, and discovered the supreme laws, which force all the effects to participate in their own causes. Some writers have dared to suggest that he renounced Art soon after his first arrival in Milan (1482). This seems to me a ridiculous abuse of a man who had turned to Nature merely in order to serve Art. Without knowledge of Nature it is impossible to devote oneself completely to Art. And although this knowledge should be, even in the case of a man like Leonardo, all but complete, the fact remains that every act accomplished in order to deepen and widen that knowledge is nothing but a service indirectly rendered to Art.

His works, every sign of his pencil or pen, were born from "the simple and mere experience, which is the true teacher" (*"sotto la semplice e mera esperienza, la quale è mæstra vera"*).

Philosophy is also written in "this very great book which lies for ever open before our eyes (the book of the Universe); one cannot, however, understand it, if the understanding of that language and the characters in which it is written is not learned"

(“ questo grandissimo libro che continuamente ci sta aperto innanzi agli occhi (io dico l’Universo) ; ma non si può intendere se prima non s’impara a intender la lingua e conoscer i caratteri nei quali è scritto ”). This book is written “ in mathematical language, and its characters are triangles, circles and other geometric figures ” ; without knowing them every understanding is vain, “ it is as a vain wandering through a dark labyrinth ” (“ uno aggirarsi vanamente per uno oscuro laberinto ”). The result of this knowledge is the discovery of the divine proportion of the figures, measures, sounds, weights, times and places.

Experience, therefore, is the only base of every science and of every art.

“ Da questa istanzia può diliberarti  
Esperienza, se giammai la provi  
Ch’ esser suol fonte a’ rivi di vostr’ arti.”

*Paradiso*, ii, 94-96.

Dante was the first to assert such a dogma, notwithstanding that his knowledge was enwrapped by scholasticism, and that all his contemporaries, as well as those of Leonardo later, instead of basing their knowledge on hard, discovered facts, preferred to quote the cold axioms of Aristotle and St. Thomas Aquinas.

We must not wonder, therefore, as we read the celebrated letter, Leonardo, the best improviser in verse of his time, addressed to Ludovico il Moro, on his arrival at Milan, bringing that lyre “ which he had made with his own hands, in great part of silver, and in the form of a horse’s skull ” (Vasari) :

“Having, most illustrious Lord, now sufficiently seen and considered the essays of all those who proclaim themselves masters and inventors of warlike instruments, that the invention of those instruments, as regards their operation, differs in nothing from those in common use, I will attempt, without derogating from the merits of others, to make myself understood by your excellency, laying open my secrets to you, and afterwards offering them to you. . . .”

By this letter he was offering the Duke the building of “very light and strong bridges,” “indestructible by fire and battle,” of “mines and secret and tortuous ways, without any noise” under fosses and rivers, and of bombards able “to hurl forth showers of small stones, almost in the semblance of a tempest [the modern shrapnel], and with the smoke of it to strike terror into the enemy [why not the modern murderous gas attack?].” “Covered chariots, secure and unattackable,” he also offers [the modern armoured car and tank], “which, entering among the enemy with their artillery, there is no multitude of men-at-arms so great that they will not break them; and behind these, infantry will be able to follow wholly unharmed.” “In time of peace, I believe that I can very well give satisfaction, in rivalry with any other, in designing both public and private buildings, and in bringing water from one place to another. Moreover, I will execute in sculpture, whether of marble, bronze or clay, and likewise in painting, whatever may be done, and in rivalry with any other, be he who he may.”

The man—the *ingegnerius militaris*—who was able to boast of such projects and accomplishments, quite well knew that nobody existed at his time, and that

very likely nobody would exist in the future centuries, so rich in wide experience of every science, from physiology to geology, from botany to chemistry, from anatomy to palæontology and cosmography, as he himself was.

While even the greatest discoverers of the future times, from Cardano to Galileo, from Newton to Volta, from Stephenson to Marconi, carried their wonderful inventions, treading a single path, aiming at a single branch of the science, Leonardo walked along every road, disclosed, if only in embryo, every secret of Nature. What has he not discovered or invented or planned, from the wheelbarrow to the diving dress, from the safety-belt to the propeller, from the aeroplane to the submarine? The secret of the submarine he refused, however, to disclose; “questo non pubblico e divulgo per le male arti delli omini, li quali userebbono li assassinamenti ne’ fondi de’ mari col rompere i navili in fondo e sommergerli, insieme colli omini che vi son dentro” (“I do not publish and divulge this thing, owing to the wickedness of men, who would use it for murders at the bottom of the sea, by breaking the ships and sinking them together with the men contained in them”).

The plans and seeds of all these inventions—and who could dare to say of how many more discoveries of the future?—are all to be found in the seven thousand pages of the manuscripts left to us by that Florentine who was “the Italian brother of Faust” (Michelet), and the “Don Juan of Knowledge” (Sar Peladan); there are all the still unexhumed treasures of his science and art experience, which will make our world richer.



The tragic history of those manuscripts adds to the mystery of Leonardo's legend. Left by the Master to the faithful disciple Francesco Melzi, they have been robbed, sacked, bargained away, exchanged, sold, torn into pieces, and scattered all over Europe. The largest part of them once belonged to the Milanese Biblioteca Ambrosiana. When the "delivering" army of Napoleon succeeded in conquering Lombardy, they were sent over, as a legitimate prey of war, to Paris. One code only, the famous "Codice Atlantico," was, later, restored to Milan; the remaining eleven are mostly still to be found in Paris.

New Italy has decided to publish everything Leonardo's hand has left. But how will such a gigantic design, which would bring great honour to a country and to a generation, be carried through? One of the chief conditions, in my opinion, ought to be that all the European nations, states and private individuals who happen to possess any precious relics of the Master should be willing to hand them over, in order to bring the complete "*corpus*" of his writings and drawings together once more. Who ought to propose such a scheme? I do not know. If a League of Nations is likely to exist in the future, and to deal with the highest problems of humanity, without which it would become a mere academy, one of the finest proposals it could decide upon would be, I think, an attempted reconstruction of this incomparable treasure, to the benefit of every nation and every future generation.

And if that "*corpus*" should be restored to Italy it would not be a too generous gift after all.

The world was made richer by Italy, in the past centuries and in our times. But the world, alas, has too often forgotten, and is still forgetting, what Italy has given to it.

# JUAN LUIS VIVES: A SCHOLAR OF THE RENASCENCE, 1492-1540.

BY PROFESSOR FOSTER WATSON, F.R.S.L.

[Read March 24th, 1920.]

IN a celebrated book, 'Les Eloges des Hommes Sçavans,' Utrecht, 1696, A. Teissier says: "Budé, Erasmus and Vives were the most learned men of their century, and, as it were, the triumvirs of the Republic of Letters in the first quarter of the sixteenth century." Budé, the great restorer of Greek studies, was one of the glories of France as the founder (1530) of the Corporation of the Royal Readers, which constituted the origin of the Collège de France. It was mainly through Budé that the leadership in scholarship passed from Italy to France. Budé clearly will never fall out of remembrance.

Erasmus, less specialised as a Greek scholar than Budé, was much wider in general contemporaneous influence. In the Republic of Letters he was, so to say, President. He was the great educator of Europe in his 'Praise of Folly,' in his 'Encomium Moriae,' in his 'Colloquies,' and in his 'Adagia,' in his Greek Testament with Latin translation, in his editions of the early Church Fathers, and in his epistolæ, revealing his wide circle of correspondents. He was consultant-scholar and scholar-dictator of Europe. He was, let us say, the whole of Harley Street as scholar-physician in letters, to the whole educated world.

No wonder, then, that the age of 1500–1536 is known as the “age of Erasmus.” Most readers only care to retain in mind one name to mark an age. So the name of Budé gets dropped except in France, and Erasmus monopolises the age—in the mind of the ordinary scholar. And so the third member of the literary triumvirate, Vives, sinks into oblivion in general reputation. It is no use to urge that Teissier tells us that his own age (nearly 200 years after Vives) regarded Erasmus as the intellect, Budé as the eloquence, and Vives as the representative of the judgment, of the Triumvirate. Even Teissier himself and his estimates in his ‘*Eloges des Hommes Sçavans*’ are now unremembered excepting by a comparatively few scholars.

To add to this crowding-out process, it remains to be said that Sainte-Beuve, the magician who resuscitated so many writers of the Renaissance, did not pause before the life and work of Vives, nor did any great European critic of the nineteenth century turn his attention to him except in Spain. As French critics, constantly and lovingly, kept the great name of Budé before the national scholarly consciousness, Spanish critics developed the grounds of scholarly indebtedness to Vives, and, in fact, eventually establish a cult, the study of which is distinguished in Spain by the term “vivismo.”

If we are asked (1) Why, then, should we concern ourselves with Vives? the answer is, that the Spanish scholars, with a marvellous past in their national history, which we in Great Britain rarely take into our intimate thoughts, regard him as one of their outstanding personalities—their greatest sixteenth

century typical scholar. Sympathy with national self-consciousness of a friendly country is a sufficient reason for our neighbourly interest.

(2) But there is a further reason. In the nineteenth century, scholarship directed itself particularly to the study of sources and origins. Very thorough and competent work was done—very often and very largely, let us candidly say, by Germany, but let us add immediately, not by Germany alone. For instance, Mr. J. A. Symonds, in his five large volumes, writes as illuminating an account of the Italian Renaissance as Burckhardt, the German, wrote in presenting his remarkable research on the same object. Such books made the Italian Renaissance very vivid and very picturesque to English readers, and the sources of modern thought discernible in Italian Renaissance thinkers and artists became widely known amongst European scholars and students.

But, after all, though we all delight in the wonderful colours and lights and shades of the early days of the Italian Renaissance, and though we follow with reverent gaze the still more developed (because later) scholarship and thought of Huguenot France, even Italy and France together do not fill up the whole outlook on the origins and sources of modern thought, of national endeavour, and of individual energy and pioneer literary experience and intuition. Spain has been hitherto much neglected in our studies, mainly because it has suffered eclipse due to its historical vicissitudes, in some of the intervening centuries from the sixteenth century onwards. But since the nineteenth century has con-

centrated attention on historical sources and origins, it is not too much to say that its survey of studies would be incomplete historically if Spain did not come into the perspective, because at the beginning of the sixteenth century the Court of Spain (that of Ferdinand and Isabella) was the most brilliant of the Courts of Europe, and its scholars were amongst the leading initiators of Renaissance movements, and, of course, absolutely the main inheritors of all Moorish gifts to modern civilisation.

So that if we are to be thorough in our historical studies of sources and origins, and in our understanding of the development of the modern world, we must take count of the gifts of Spain to the intellectual and social progress of the world. One of the chapters in the story of that progress must be devoted to the study of the greatest of the Spanish Renaissance scholars, Juan Luis Vives.

And so, after many generations, historical study brings us back again to the consideration of that old judgment of over four centuries ago : Budé, Erasmus and Vives were, as it were, the triumvirs of the Republic of Letters in the early sixteenth century.

Our interest will centre not so much on their position and rank amongst scholars as upon the nature of their contribution to intellectual progress, together with the initiative in new developments, along the lines of which modern culture has persistently advanced. With these considerations in mind our interest in Vives will be both directed to his personality, and to the distinctive ideas, explicit and implicit, for which he stood.

And first, in spite of having taken so long



to insist upon his Spanish origin, it is necessary to qualify the assertion by adding that though he enjoyed a Spanish bringing-up, and preserved a constant love of his native Spain throughout his life, yet from sixteen years of age onwards he was a sojourner in other countries—a cosmopolitan wanderer, who combined patriotism with humanism. Herein he differed from Erasmus, who lived in the Republic of Letters, as if in a serener atmosphere than that of family, civic, or national ties of any kind. To Vives his nationality was a help to his humanism, whilst to Erasmus the very idea of regionalism was anathema. The ideal of life to Erasmus was that of being a scholar, pure and simple. To Vives, manhood of the highest type implied the atmosphere of scholarship as a transfiguring influence. But full individual life was wider and even higher than scholarship, and corporate life was a still more compelling aim. Scholarship to him should not absorb all human energies; it could not be regarded as the be-all and end-all of existence. It did not rightly exist as an end in itself; it was only a part in the whole perspective of life. Instead of being body and soul, it was, let us say, to the spirit what eyes are to the body.

We are bound, therefore, in considering Vives, much more even than in the case of Erasmus, though we all recognise the charm of the latter's personality, to follow the course of the Spaniard's personal life.

Let us then, of necessity, briefly glance at the life of Vives, and then summarise the sources and origins of modern ideas and activities which we

find to spring up in his writings. For he is one of those men—great men—who developed life and thought almost *pari passu*.

Vives' life, then, is associated with Spain at Valencia, with France at Paris, with Flanders at Louvain and Bruges, and with England at Oxford and London.

### I. AT VALENCIA.

It has been said that Vives was "only Spanish by the accident of his birth."

But let us remember that Vives was born in that *annus mirabilis* 1492, in which Columbus discovered America, and in which the Moorish Granada fell into the hands of Ferdinand and Isabella. Valencia was full of the traditions of the Cid. It is said to have possessed three hundred churches, and when Vives, at a later period of his life, passed on to Bruges, he can hardly have found a greater environment of bell-towers than he had left in his native city. Valencia was the first Spanish city in which a printing-press was set up. It was a veritable city of the Moors, who had introduced improvements in industry, in commerce, in science, and above all, in agriculture—for the district around Valencia is still distinguished as "The Garden of Spain." Moreover, Valencia was renowned for the elegance of manners and the courtesy of its inhabitants.

Vives came of a noble family. This has been urged as *primâ facie* objection to consider him, in an age of democracy. But it was a family which recognised the responsibilities of distinction : *noblesse*

*oblige*. The family device was "*Siempre vivas*"—shall we translate it?—"Life and more life." Vives' personal motto, he tells us, was "*Sine querela*"—"Live without quarrelling." The two mottoes together were no slight dicta for guidance. We may surely say that the city of Valencia was even more noble than the family of Vives. Valencia—the very name was equivalent to the Greek *Πόμνη*, and meant power. It typified the power that comes from variety of experiences. It had been taken by the Goths. It had been ruled by the Moors, and always—always—it accumulated wealth, mental and material. In history its life had been varied, for it had been a subject-city and it had been a conquering city untrammelled from without. It was once a republic. Especially had it been professionally rich in distinguished physicians and lawyers.

There is no city in Spain to-day with men and women of finer physique or with a deeper sense of colour in life in every direction, in countenance, costume, and in every possession of voluntary choice. The sense of reverence for the great things of life was typified in the Cathedral; the Micalete, built two hundred years before Vives, and in the Lonja, the great Silk-merchants' Hall, where the very motto preached daily the essential connection between religion and commerce.

The physical riches and beauty of Valencia are revealed in the great fruit, vegetable and flower market, one of the wonders of Spain. The Moors had placed Paradise in the *huerta* of the windings of the river Turia. They imagined Heaven to be suspended, and a portion of it to have

fallen down on earth in and around Valencia :  
“ *Coelum hic cecidisse putes.*”

In 1538, about thirty years after leaving Valencia, Vives wrote a book, ‘*Exercitatio*,’ a book of dialogues from which boys and girls might learn to speak Latin.

In one of the dialogues—the “*Deambulatio Matutina*”—one of the interlocutors, Joannius, says : “ There is no sense which has not a lordly enjoyment ! First, the eyes ! What varied colours, what clothing of the earth ! And trees ! What tapestry ! What paintings are comparable with this view ? . . . Not without truth has the Spanish poet, Juan de Mena, called May the painter of the earth. Then the ear. How delightful to hear the singing of the birds, and especially the nightingale. Listen to her (as she sings in the thicket), from whom, as Pliny says, issues the modulated sound of the completed science of music. . . . In very fact you have, as it were, the whole study and school of music in the nightingale. Her little ones ponder and listen to the notes, which they imitate. The tiny disciple listens with keen intentness (would that our teachers received like attention !) and gives back the sound. . . . The correction by example and a certain criticism from the teacher-bird are closely observed ; Nature leads them aright, whilst human beings often exercise their wills wrongly. Added to this, there is a sweet scent breathing in from every side, from the meadows, from the crops, from the trees, even from the fallow land and the neglected fields ! Whatsoever you lift to your mouth has its relish, as even from the air itself, like the earliest and softest honey.”

Thus Vives speaks out his whole heart—to school-

boys. His attitude is not merely aesthetic or even psychological. It is that of life. In the "*de tradendis Disciplinis*" Vives lays down the educational theory that training in logic should be balanced and supplemented by Nature-study.

All this concentration on adaptation to boys would have been foreign to the spirit of our Erasmus. It would have been trifling and irrelevant. But such earlier scenes of his own boyhood formed the apperceptive basis of the later views of Vives.

Intellectually, Vives left Valencia, still a medievalist, at seventeen years of age. When the great Spaniard, Antonio Nebrissensis, returned from Italy, with a Latin grammar modelled on the New Learning, and it was introduced into the Valencian Academy, where Vives was a pupil at fifteen years of age, at the instigation of his teacher, Vives wrote and spoke declamations against the new ideas of grammatical reform received from the Italian Renaissance. The boy began by being a medievalist—a reactionary if you will. Nevertheless he was in his intellectual development to go through the whole gamut of the intellectual progress of his times, and to end by outstripping even the leaders. But psychologically it is of interest that he should begin by supporting the established order. Most youths on the way to become reformers try to measure themselves against their environment first, and by defying it, to assert themselves in the adoption of revolutionary views.

## II. AT PARIS.

The young Spaniard at seventeen years, *i. e.* in 1509, went to the University of Paris, and for the next

five years associated himself with the Spanish section there, in youthful companionship, whilst his mind travelled over the whole domain of the ascertainable knowledge of the age. This was at the critical moment when Paris itself was changing from medieval to Renaissance ideas and studies. It was the time when Guillaume Budé had been trained and trained himself to the new studies of the Renaissance, especially of Greek—Budé, the prodigy of France, the student intent on scholarship and nothing else. It is said of Budé that on his wedding day he thought he made a great sacrifice by only studying for three hours. After marriage the story is told of him that a servant, rushing into his study to tell him the house was on fire, met with the answer from Budé: "Tell my wife," he said, going on with his writing: "you know very well I never meddle with *household affairs*." Budé, however, had already realised, as Erasmus put it, "We can do nothing in studies without Greek." This is still the *pons asinorum* for the would-be student to-day with regard to the history of scholarship. Whilst Vives was at Paris, with open ear and open mind, he learned gradually to change his attitude towards medievalism. His earliest treatises, dating back to the Paris period, however, only show a slowly broadening attitude towards the old studies and the old methods.

### III. IN FLANDERS.

In 1514 Vives left Paris for Bruges and then for Louvain. In the years 1514–19 the significance of the Paris experiences settled into a deep conviction



within him of the futility of the medieval methods which still prevailed there, and he wrote his iconoclastic treatise, the '*In Pseudo-dialecticos*,' a book comparable in aim and scope with the '*Encomium Moriae*,' the '*Praise of Folly*,' of Erasmus. Erasmus was cynical and satirical. But Vives made a direct attack, a completely serious, frontal attack, full of incisiveness and irrevocable decision, against the methods of the logicians and dialecticians of Paris University. He suggested the reading of great classical authors as a substitute for constant, interminable academic discussions. Thus, "he broke the bridge behind him." He could not retreat back to medievalism, and went forward in his intellectual outlook to meet the future, half-way.

Disputations about everything, glosses and commentaries, the endless terminology of definitions, divisions, argumentations, majors, minors, conclusions, leading to disputations on *realitates*, *formalitates*, *entitates*, *de modo significandi vocum*—all full of sound and fury, signifying nothing! For the whole picture of the old methods the '*In Pseudo-dialecticos*' is often more full and vivid than the brochures of Erasmus, and much more direct and balanced. Vives is a witness against his University of Paris, with deep sorrow, and after a fierce struggle within himself. But he is convinced that this method of altercation from the birth of a pupil, to make no end of it for him until his death, is *all wrong, futile, and a shameful waste of intellectual vigour*.

Here, then, we are at the very sources, the very origins, of the change from the mediaeval

to the modern world. Vives wonders, as so many reformers have done, whether it would not be better to let the obscurantists go on, heaping up their "insanities" (it is his term), so that every one will recoil in distaste from their methods—not only scholars but even all men. In one passage, he says that if the corrupt Latin used by the academic disputants were brought into the light of the ordinary vernacular, the whole host of working artisans, with hissing and clamour and the clanging of tools, would hoot the dialecticians out of the city of Paris. This is the first instance I know of, in which any writer has called artisans to witness in a judgment on an academic question, and it is interesting that in this first decisively era-marking document of Vives, he thus first shows a democratic attitude which he was afterwards to develop. We are at the origins in the modern world of a reference of questions of study to working men, supposed to be the special invention of the Workers' Educational Association (founded on the basis of the magnificent experiment of the Working Men's College of F. D. Maurice and the Christian Socialists). Suddenly Vives turns from impassioned invective to a vision of the future: "I see from the depths a change is coming. Amongst all the nations, men are coming forward of clear, excellent, and free intellects, impatient of servitude, who are determined to thrust off the yoke of this tyranny from their necks. They are calling their fellow-citizens to liberty." Vives does not say fellow-scholars, but "fellow-citizens." Knowledge, apparently to him, even at this stage, is for the good of citizens as citizens, not for scholars only. Vives

published his treatise in the enemy's camp itself, at Paris. The effect was electrical. It was, as people say, the psychological moment. "The change," says Vives, and his words partake of the pathos which characterises so many, when they have changed their long and deeply cherished convictions, "was so odious to me that often I turned away from the thought of the better humanist studies, back to my old studies, so that I might persuade myself that I had not spent so many years at Paris, to no good purpose."

The breaking up of old associations, the snapping of the cables which bound him to his old Valencian school and the University of Paris, was, however, for Vives, eventually, more than balanced, in all his pain and struggle, by being received into the leadership and friendship of Erasmus.

At this time of electrifying the learned world Vives was twenty-seven years of age. Erasmus, in a letter to Sir Thomas More, said, "He, Luis Vives, is one who will overshadow the name of Erasmus" (who was then fifty-five years of age). "No other man is more fitted than Vives to overwhelm the battalions of the dialecticians, in whose camps he served for a long time."

When Erasmus and Vives met for the first time is uncertain, but the older scholar and the younger student came into close and continuous friendship at Louvain during the years 1519 and 1520, just 400 years ago. Erasmus was editing the 'Fathers of the Church,' and to the great delight of the young Vives entrusted to him the preparation of a text of, and notes on, St. Augustine's 'City of God.' Vives was gaining a livelihood by acting as tutor to a young

aristocrat called de Croy. Erasmus left Louvain, the pupil died, and Vives suffered a nervous breakdown over his enormous task, bringing about a paralysis of will. He removed to Bruges, where he found the solace of Spanish physicians and Spanish treatment. One word further about the 'St. Augustine.' In his notes he spoke spontaneously, and his views were judged to be heretical on many points. Eventually the book was put upon the 'Index Expurgatorius' donec corrigatur. In the meantime Erasmus cooled down in his friendship towards Vives, and wrote doleful comments, in his correspondence with him, stating that he had attended Frankfort Book Market, and that not a copy of Vives' 'St. Augustine' had been sold there. Yet, on the other hand, of all the praise ever bestowed on Erasmus none was more emphatic and none more sincere than the eulogium on Erasmus, to be read in Vives' preface to his edition of the Latin text of St. Augustine's 'City of God.'

With the unutterable sadness of failure all round—in the death of his beloved pupil, in the ill-fortune of his big book, in the estrangement of Erasmus—Vives looked towards England. In the movements connected with the Field of the Cloth of Gold, the meetings of literary groups have been overlooked, through the picturesqueness and significance of political discussion. The chief meeting-place, before and after, the Field of the Cloth of Gold, was at St. Donatian's, a monastery of Bruges, where the good Dean, Marcus Laurinus, welcomed all lovers of literature. Here came Erasmus, Budé, Vives, and that fascinating figure, Sir Thomas More.

Let us remember—to the credit of that proud and ambitious prelate Wolsey—that it was he who cheered up the desponding Vives, and invited him to Oxford to take the lectureship in rhetoric which he had just established there. The invitation was re-enforced by the King, Henry VIII, to whom Vives had dedicated his ‘St. Augustine,’ and by Queen Catharine of Aragon. As compatriots from Spain, Vives and the Queen had much in common. He received an annuity from her as well as from the King. Finally, Sir Thomas More begged Vives to make England his home, and, what was specially to the point, offered him open house in his new and delightful manor at Chelsea.

#### IV. IN ENGLAND.

Of Vives’ Oxford life and work in the inculcation of humanism I will say nothing to-day, except that it was here a young Flemish man, de Praet, afterwards Mayor of Bruges, urged Vives to help Bruges by writing a treatise on the social amelioration of that city. This worked itself out in Vives’ mind into a book on poor-relief (‘De Subventionem Pauperum’), the spirit of which may be judged by a quotation from the preface of dedication to the Town Council of Bruges:

“It was the original cause of cities that there should be opportunity in each of them where love (*caritas*) should unite citizens, in the giving and receiving of benefits and in mutual help, and their association together should be strengthened. It ought to be the task and keen endeavour of the administrations of the city to take care that each

should help each, so that no one should be overwhelmed or oppressed, by any loss falling on him unjustly—that the stronger should assist the weaker, that the harmony and love of citizens may increase, day by day. And, as it is disgraceful to a father of a family, in his wealthy home, to permit anyone to suffer hunger, or the disgrace of being without clothes, or in rags, so it is similarly unfitting in a city that the magistrates should tolerate any starvation or physical distress. . . .” He asks the Town Council not to be annoyed by his writing. “At least,” he adds, “consider the subject itself with as great care as you would punctiliously inquire into a lawsuit of a citizen, in which there were, say, a thousand florins at stake. I wish you and your city all prosperity and happiness. Bruges, 5 Jan. 1526.”

Here is the modern note! Nor, indeed, have we realised, in our age, the ideal of gentle Christian goodwill in poor-relief as an individual and civic task which he suggests. This book of Vives is at once an origin and source for the modern period of history, and even yet points us well ahead in spirit, as it has done for 400 years, all neglected. Another remarkable document, I believe never hitherto noticed by any English writer, which should rank as important in a study of origins in social and intellectual history, is a letter addressed to King Henry VIII, in which he, Vives, asserts the striking Renaissance idea that the King ought to be the intellectual leader as much as the military leader of his people. It is worth noting that it is after his introduction to the English Court that Vives



began to urge this view, and also, one must suppose, after discussions in that home of Thomas More in Chelsea, which seemed to Erasmus a university in itself.

"Either I am vastly mistaken," says Vives, "or else nothing is more vital than that the *people* should learn to listen more attentively to what is consistent with the healthy restfulness of the State, and care should be taken that the young should drink in—*right* and *sound* opinions. Thus they will know what is the use, the advantage and the aim, of each element of welfare in its essential perspective, and how it should be estimated. They will then become like tried goldsmiths, with their Lydian stone to serve as indicator of the value of every individual factor which we seek or avoid in life, such as *money, possessions, friends, honours, nobility, sovereignty, outward form, physique, pleasure, wit, erudition, morality, religion.*" In other words, Vives advocates the study by all the *people* (it is this appeal to the education of the people, as such, that is so modern in Vives) of the study of the perspective of *values*. Is not this the very function of a University, and here is Vives advocating this study for the *people* at large. "So educated," says Vives, "grown-up people will not give precedence in religion to outward form and ceremony while they leave the mind impure and impious within—and in literature, they will not devote their attention to the topics which render men more stubborn rather than wiser, but they will be drawn to the studies by which the moral basis is consolidated, and the whole life built up. . . . No one in the commonwealth is outside the scope of religion. The mass of the people [the

word used is *vulgus*] will be helped in literature partly by conferences, partly by books written in the mother-tongue, advising them as to the subjects worthy of reading and knowing, by which their good hours may not be spent in reciting old women's fables, nor in actions of a non-exemplary kind."

This appeal to the higher education of youth and adults is, I believe, the earliest historical demand for what we now call university extension and university tutorial classes.

The suggestion springs from a Spaniard, for the good of England, and arises from a love of England, which has developed largely from association with that wonderful group around Thomas More, consisting of such people as Leland, Harris, Grocyn, Linacre, Sir Thomas and Lady Elyot, William Lily, Reginald Pole, as well as numerous foreign visitors and correspondents, including the best *littérateurs* of Europe. The *rapprochement* of Vives to More and his family and his friends was that of a common attitude, founded on the common principle of a deepening love of mankind—of the democracy, as we may say, in the case of Vives, More and Pole.

Vives was loyal — always loyal to his past self, and to his friends—and when the divorce of Catharine of Aragon stirred the Court he was put under surveillance, and, eventually, had to flee from England.

Two years afterwards he wrote his great work on education (1531). He had reached his final view—differing from Erasmus, and still more from the Italian scholars, and from the scholar Budé and the

French school. For he proclaimed the social outlook, expressed in such terms as "We (scholars) must transfer our solicitude (from princes) to the people." And again: "Having acquired our knowledge, we must turn it to usefulness, and employ it to the common good."

This work of Vives on education is entitled '*de Disciplinis*.' It is divided into two parts—the "*de corruptis Artibus*," libri vii, and the "*de tradendis Disciplinis*," libri v. The former part deals with the degeneration of knowledge since the classical times, when the liberal arts flourished. There is to be found here an immense amount of interesting material—probably, on the whole, the best picture in a single work, of the state of the whole range of knowledge at the beginning of the sixteenth century. The second part, the "*de tradendis Disciplinis*," or the "Transmission of Knowledge," may be described as the positive or constructive side of Vives' treatment of education, with his educational theory. The five books deal with educational origins, schools, language teaching, higher studies, studies and life; and a charming study of the scholar's life and character, as it should manifest itself both to itself and to the world.

Vives is the first writer to ground education on psychology. "Observe the child, and adapt your aims and methods to his needs," may be said to be his main principle. Only those fit for the higher learning should proceed to it. The slow wits are more to be trusted than the quick. But conferences of masters of each school should meet every few

months and determine individual procedure for each boy. The vernacular should be the medium of instruction, not Latin. Boys should be allowed in playing times (contrary to the custom of the times), to speak to one another in the vernacular. All languages, Latin included, should be taught by the direct method. Grammar-teaching should be brought to a minimum. Reading of authors, acquisition of the knowledge-material to be found in foreign writers is the chief and first concern. Vives was the first to attach importance to the teaching of modern history. He thinks that Froissart, Monstrelet, Comines and the Spanish Valera "are not less worthy of being known and read than the majority of Greek and Latin historians." He has much to say as to the importance of religious education. Pupils should "enter into their schools full of reverence, as if into holy temples." Education has for its purpose the culture of the mind. It is not merely the instrument for acquiring honours or money. Payment of teachers should not be based upon capitation fees, but should be arranged by the State, so that teachers' salaries should be "just as much as a good man would desire, but such as a bad man would despise." Teachers should not be anxious for large numbers of pupils, but for excellent, intrinsic work. "Christ taught for our service, not for His own ostentation." "Who can bewail the fewness of his scholars, when the Creator of the world was satisfied with a school of twelve men?"

The chief feature of Vives' treatise is this demand for the highest and most disinterested work of the teacher, and the glow and love of acquisition of

knowledge on the part of the pupil. Sir Thomas More had written his *Utopia*, where even the seafaring man was excellently trained in Greek as well as in Latin. Vives, who was one of the happy band of visitors to More's house at Chelsea, is characterised by the same spirit. Both were not only learned men, but also lovers of knowledge. The spirit of Vives' treatment of education may be stated in his own words: "If you think, friends, that I seem to offer right judgments, see well to it that you give your adherence to them, because they are true, not because they are mine. . . . You, who seek truth, make your stand, wherever you think that she is."

And so, in studying Vives, as we must do in the search for origins and sources of modern education, economics and of sociology, as well as of the more classical humanist subjects, we find the immense gift added unto us of coming into contact with a remarkably all-round human being, of a rich, truth-seeking, fearless and lovable personality, as attractive as a man as he was distinguished as a many-sided scholar. And yet, as a scholar, we remember his eminence: "Budé, Erasmus and Vives were the most learned men of their century, and, as it were, triumvirs of the Republic of Letters."





## WALT WHITMAN AND AMERICA.

BY THE RIGHT HON. LORD CHARNWOOD,  
M.A., F.R.S.L.

[Read February 20th, 1918.]

THIS paper is the outcome of a mistake. If I can prevent that mistake from causing you quite as much vexation as it has caused me, I must make a clean breast of it; I shall thus in any case show you that I have not, in inviting you to hear me upon Walt Whitman and America, played on you a discourteous and feeble practical joke.

I lately made some study of American political history. In doing so I came upon observations scattered about in Walt Whitman's prose writings which illuminated for me the life and events of his time. I became also more deeply interested than before in a reflection which has probably occurred at some time to many of us, but which forms the staple of all his most serious writing, namely that the United States of America seem to present an enormous mass of new material for poetry, and yet have produced relatively little literature that is great or characteristic. I recalled the time when I had read Walt Whitman's own poetry and found in much of it a singular charm, and it occurred to me that some few things which I should like to say about America, particularly to say to such an

audience as this, might be said by means of a more thorough study of Whitman.

I turned to this with the confidence of a man whose early loves have never before let him down, who in literature and all else has found the things which he admired as a boy more admirable as life goes on.

I knew, of course, that many Americans feel surprised and resentful at the peculiar interest often manifested here in a writer whom they would be sorry to regard as characteristic of their country. I prepared myself to contend with them stoutly. I have gone over wholly to their side. I came soon, not to the feeling that Whitman just failed as a poet (for that I knew before), but to the conviction that he represents something in literature which is positively adverse to poetry.

This, indeed, might have given me something not uninteresting to present to you; but that is not the whole story. I think I ought to say that in the very last few days I have become convinced of something which I had been ready contemptuously to deny. Any thorough criticism of Walt Whitman, criticism which seeks to see the book in its living unity with the man of flesh and blood who wrote it, must resolve itself into that sort of study in darkly morbid psychology which I am certain is not worth making.

So far then as the first half of my subject is concerned, I am tempted merely to refer you to that exquisite study of Walt Whitman in person—a beautiful old man who had failed as a poet and in other ways and still remained brave and patient—

which Mr. Gosse has included in a volume perversely named by him 'Critical Kitcats.' But I know that what I have just said may suggest a poet of real power whom from prejudices puritanical or mediæval I am unable to recognise; and so I wish to insist for a moment on my view that Whitman, who honestly desired to show the way towards a new poetry fit for his new country, really points right away from any possible poetry for any possible country. I am sure I am not in the least unappreciative of his beauties; there are passages of his curious form of song which to my ears ring with a true melody; he was richly endowed with that part of a poet's mental outfit which our fathers called sensibility; he shared with all true poets that observant eye which notes correctly all manner of surface appearances just because it always sees some way beneath the surface. Thus it is impossible to turn over his pages without being arrested again and again by his vivid characterisation of some of the objects that pass before his gaze in interminable procession, or conceiving the illusion that one will some day be able to read those pages straight through. Yet for all his gifts, I repeat, he not merely stops short of being a poet—he turns the other way. I do not know any definition of poetry, except the famous and slightly cryptic phrase of Milton, "poetry which is simple, sensuous, passionate." As to the simplicity and the sensuousness I am not sure what to say, but of this I am sure: Walt Whitman is not passionate. There is indeed the expression in his writings of vague sensations which cannot well be captured by prose; but there

is never the response of the mind to some definite object of human joy, or sorrow, or wonder, or hope, seized in its intense actuality and quickening or arresting the heart's beat! There recurs to me a well-known line :

“I arise from dreams of thee.”

With Walt Whitman the dreaming is there—open-eyed dreaming no doubt, in which things innumerable are correctly perceived, but he never arises from the dreams, nor is there ever any “thee,” only “you,” the indistinguishable and vaguely beloved crowd.

With this failure or betrayal of the central attribute of poetry I should connect—if I might venture so far into the province of a criticism in which I am the merest amateur—the defect of his literary form. In the curious kind of more or less rhythmic chant (Greek strophes with no antistrophes to them) which he thought appropriate for a poet of the new world, he succeeds notably now and then; but it is I suppose uncontested that in the bulk his semi-rhythmical form is ineffective, tiresome, and absurd. He was not bound to have studied the laws (for laws it presumably has) of that sort of composition, but he was thereby bound all the more to acquire by restraint and self-discipline a mastery of his own chosen weapon. He never did so. He only forsook alike the freedom of prose and the strength of verse. And so it is with his undisciplined use of words. The Government printer at Washington once wished to amend an official utterance of Lincoln's. It contained the words

“rebellion sugar-coated,” and this officer considered “sugar-coated” an undignified phrase. The President was impenitent, because he said that everybody in the States would know what “sugar-coated” meant. Now the trouble with Whitman is that when he talks of “eidolons,” “eligibilities” and the rest, no one in the States or out of them can possibly know what he means, or escape the suspicion that he does not quite know himself. A poet must at least be master of his own words. I have alleged that no coal from the altar of real poetic thought had touched Walt Whitman’s lips. The total laziness of his utterance confirms me. Any true impulse towards the crown of poetry must have taught him that “that immortal garland must be run for not without dust or sweat.” Englishmen are apt to share his impatience at that character of industrious copyists of which the best writers of New England may be accused, and yet without setting, say, Longfellow extremely high—even so high as Walt Whitman himself did—I remain of the conviction that they were pioneers for their countrymen along a trail that led somewhere in letters, and that Walt Whitman set out to lead them on a road that leads nowhere. A writer may be the opposite of a poet and yet be something of a thinker and a teacher. I am very far from saying that this original and forcible writer had nothing to teach anybody, very far from disowning the debt I shall owe him if the later portions of this paper are in any way interesting to you. But I cannot pass on without alleging further that the bulk of what he took to be his doctrine is as deeply infected as

the bulk of what he took to be his poetry. Now the English critics who have paid tributes to Whitman have been considerable men, but they have themselves been liable to this entirely respectful observation: they have been men bearing a burden of ill-health, deprived of that vigour of the body which might, it seems, so fitly have supported the genuine strength and health of their minds. It is an honest temptation of such men to pay a deference to the merely animal, brutal, or even bestial, which the actual possessor of bodily strength is not tempted to pay except in a passing phase of expiring boyhood. It is with minds with some such bias as this that Whitman's unmanly prostration before anything that is outwardly masculine receives a sympathy not its due. I need not dwell on that which he himself most valued in his writing—the recurring extravagance about male comradeship—nor on that over which assailants and apologists have most contended, the indulgence in a baboon-like nakedness. Of both, as it seems to me, the true ethical criticism, once put, is overwhelming. It can be put in one sentence: let his attitude towards his chosen topics be in a sense as innocent as you may be pleased to suppose it, no human being who knows what he is talking about can ever be found to apply to it the adjective “manly.” If my voice could reach writers who, in a temper more manly or womanly according as they are man or woman (that is, in a temper more accordant with the root facts of human nature in the actual circumstances of modern life), should be led to handle the particular subjects which Walt Whitman paws, I



would wish to say this further: Outspokenness, strictly speaking, is a virtue, but it is a virtue which can be counterfeited, and the counterfeit is apt to pass for current coin through a fallacy which critics have often, but none too often exposed. Speech is not the less expressive for having its reticences. The natural embarrassment which checks us in the expression of certain emotions, which indeed governs in some degree all true expression of all emotion, is something of which we cannot rid ourselves completely while we are in real touch with nature, or while the emotion remains genuinely that which it purports to be. But I shall not pause now to expand this oracular pronouncement; I would merely note (passing clear away from the topics which gave occasion for it) that notoriously silence is often an expressive thing, as Whitman himself was well aware. I may part from this author, for whom I do not wish to dissemble my lingering regard, with the quotation, made to me long ago by a friend, which I think first aroused my interest in him. He is about to describe a fighting incident of the rebellion in Texas against Mexico, and he describes it with vivid effect; but the description itself is not so vivid as the parenthesis in which he refuses to describe another incident:

“Now I tell what I knew in Texas in my early youth,  
(I tell not the fall of Alamo,  
Not one escaped to tell the fall of Alamo,  
The hundred and fifty are dumb yet at Alamo).”

So then I am left to essay the second part of my subject without that connecting thread on which I

had purposed to string my thoughts, and without the pretext which might have veiled their essential impertinence; for an impertinence it is to discourse of a great country, with which one has scraped acquaintance, in the manner to which I have unwittingly committed myself.

First, then, is it true that the output of America in works of imagination is less than might fairly have been hoped from a great nation animated by an intense national life and embodying a great national tradition?

Certainly there has long prevailed both in this country and in the United States a sense of disappointment on this score. Is that disappointment justified? As to the facts, it is, I suppose, true that the United States have not produced poets or thinkers whom we ought to call really great; true also that the best literature which they have produced does not bear the stamp of a characteristic national genius (as, for example, Shelley or Wordsworth bear emphatically the stamp of England). And this is apt to impress us a little more painfully because America is a country in which from the first education has been highly prized, and because also it is no less prolific than other modern lands in writers of skill and credit. I took lately from a public library an 'American Anthology.' I am a Fellow not only of this august Society, but of the Royal Statistical Society, and I had an impulse to count the names in the index of writers. I had got up to 500 when my brain grew dizzy at the thought of so mighty an array of citizens of a great new world who—

“ Like the Cherubick host in thousand quires  
Touch their Immortal Harps of golden wires,”

and without having definitely ascertained how far they actually exceeded 500, I turned to compute the number of our own bards included in our own best-known anthology, or (as an honest statistician ought to own) an early edition of it. It is 77. Seriously the mere fact that an American anthology can appear and obtain some vogue which is framed with such vast inclusiveness goes far to prove a certain inferiority of standard. And, if we recall one by one the American writers of a generation back who can be counted as classics, they have been recognised as gladly and prized as highly in this country as their own, they take the same place in the estimation of critics in both countries, it is a place which is assured, but certainly it is not a place in the front rank. Nor, to set against this, do we find in them, as some—I do not know why—have expected, something characteristically American; they have the local colour, often a beautiful colour, of their home, say in New England, or their haunts, say in the Sierra Nevada, but if their spirit savours to us of a great nationality with its great tradition, that nationality (and why should anyone complain?) is our common nationality. They are just good English writers, no one of whom happens to be quite as good as were the two or three greatest of that period in England itself. And if one turns from imaginative literature in the narrower sense to the closely cognate domain of science, I understand that something similar may be said. Applied science

has been there in plenty from Benjamin Franklin's day to our own, and scientific instruction abounds in the schools, but I gather quite definitely that the great master of science has not yet arisen in America.

So I take it that whether one puts the defect higher or lower, the fact of this relative unproductiveness of America so far is not to be disputed.

What is to my mind very disputable is the significance which many people both here and there have been in a hurry to attribute to it. Is it disappointing to any expectation which ought reasonably to have been formed? Does it proceed from some defect of American spiritual tradition and in the general constitution of the distinctively American mind, or wholly from circumstances which, so far as they exist in the old country, produce just as marked results? Does it bear out the impression, easily produced by certain other quite fallacious appearances, of something prevailingly materialist in the temper of American civilisation? Does the relative poverty in actual poems detract one jot from the value to the world of the tradition, the actual history, the present character, the promise for the future of that great community of the New World—to put it crudely, should it lead us to class the United States of America as another, a larger and somewhat older Argentine Republic? These are the sort of questions to which I would like to suggest an answer—for men do ask themselves these questions.

First, as to the precise extent of the admitted fact from which I start. Observe that there is a

large field of literary activity within which it does not hold good at all—the writing of history, books of travel and adventure, the memoirs which men of action happily sometimes write of themselves. Of the standard works which worthily recount some great period of human history, not a few are American; no traveller ever related his adventures with happier art than Parkman in ‘On the Oregon Trail’; no other captain has written of stirring deeds in which he has borne a part so movingly as the rough and shy and silent Grant. Indeed, if any value attaches to the broad impression I have received in a certain mild amount of historical research, which has led me either to sample or to study not a few American memoirs or books giving the writer’s recollection or judgment as to the events of his own time for the benefit of his own children, I should say that in freshness of sympathy, in general justice of outlook, in the power of picking out the important from the trivial or vulgar, in unaffectedness and in dignity, American writing of this sort stands on a higher level than the corresponding literature of our own country. And also in oratory, which, though we sometimes forget it, must always remain one of the main branches of literature, a branch in which the enduring classics are few, there are after all one or two American classics which may last when all other recorded speeches in our tongue have ceased to be quoted any more.

Next observe (what Englishmen naturally did not observe when Tennyson, Browning, Swinburne, Darwin were still living among us and Dickens

and many more were but lately laid to rest) the most recent period of high literary productivity in England now definitely belongs to the past. Without seeking to analyse the cause of this, the hurry, the multiplicity of affairs in every man's life, the sense of an old order changing, the appalling prevalence of printed matter, the rift, which the spread of education seems at first only to widen, between the cultured few and the main stream of national life, I think we may jump with confidence to a new point of outlook over this often debated topic. Taking it for granted that America does not yet rank as one of those great countries which are on the whole fertile in great literature, there is no need whatever to seek for the cause in any characteristic of the normal American mind. Sufficient cause might be found very easily in the circumstances in which the majority of Americans of ability are placed, and in the character of the tasks to which the most vigorous intellects of the country have perforce addressed themselves.

Briefly, from the very moment that America found its feet as a nation, it has been confronted with an incessant rush of urgent practical exigencies, denying to its most imaginative minds the large breathing space which creative work in the literary sphere of imagination seems to demand. It is perfectly true that the specially American contribution to the common spiritual life of Western civilisation or of the English-speaking world is so far not chiefly to be seen in literary form, but it is none the more negligible on that account.

Dismissing, then, a prejudice which is less unjust



but not therefore more surely founded than the illusion that America is exclusively peopled by vulgar dispensers of millions dishonestly acquired, let me say a little of that interest (unsurpassable as it seems to me) from the special point of view of this Society, which attaches to the history and to the distinctive tradition of America.

The peculiar interest of America to an Englishman lies, of course, in the recognition of something very familiar to us, transplanted into conditions which are wholly strange. It is baffling to our comprehension, partly because we hardly appreciate the potency of the novel external conditions, partly also because we do not appreciate to what an old stratum of our old-world life the familiar element belongs. As to the force of the new conditions, I think the mere passage in a train across the continent of North America gives an intelligent Englishman a sensation which he can with difficulty convey to others. But a little imagination, applied to the study of a map and of a few dates and statistics which can be found in Whitaker's Almanac, may do a good deal. Here is a whole nation, not from perversity but of necessity concentrated on material expansion and the development of material resources, first having to gain a secure foothold on which to raise its sustenance among savage tribes and malarial pestilences, then clearing backwoods and spreading itself over vast virgin territories, and finally—hardest condition of all—digesting into its body politic inconceivable invading hordes of strange men from every nation under the sun, and making good among them such elements of law and policy,

general education, etc., etc., as it had been able under some pressure of haste to evolve itself. Then there is the fact of vast distances, entailing a thousand consequences, of which take only these two: there cannot be for the greater part of the country anything resembling a metropolitan newspaper press diffusing reliable news from a centre, nor can there be a few first-class centres of education, or the like. A certain simplicity, wholly strange to us, must follow. Contrast with this the equal difficulty that attaches to the growth, more rapid than even we here can conceive, of huge cities.

A certain combined sense of hardships normally to be confronted, and of enormous possibilities of success for any individual, is another obvious consequence of life in a country that is still new.

On the other hand, I doubt whether we yet realise the conservatism of American civilisation. It was from the England of George III that the colonies broke away, but it was not the English life of George III of which they divided the inheritance with us. It was far rather—the thought has been well worked out by many others, so I will just state it crudely and dogmatically—it was far rather the England of Elizabeth that lived on, transplanted to that New World. Exiles from home cling tenaciously to the few household gods they bring with them; people confronted inevitably with much change do not make the changes that they can avoid. Thus there is a deep conservatism in America. *Inter alia* it conserves that romance of commercial adventure which was in fact so large an element in

the spirit of the Elizabethan age, though we may falsely think it modern. But in any case the two civilisations did in certain respects part company a long while further back than we generally realise, and the blending of the very old and the very new in America is a subject full of poetry of its own. Heroic poetry, too. What an amazing fact it is that there exists at all an unified, unmistakable American people, of whom how small a proportion belong racially to the old American stock, yet of whom the whole are perceptibly leavened with the spirit of a few little old-world settlements, Puritan or Cavalier.

None the less (and here is a thing which is harder still to appreciate), here is a nation which is not wholly a product of slow growth ; which at a definite moment set out of set purpose to be a nation, which, sharing though it does very fully in an ancient heritage, yet has based its distinctive patriotism—the claim, that is, of its government upon loyal sentiment—not upon the unformulated traditions of a long past but upon a formally enunciated principle. “ A new nation conceived in liberty and dedicated to the proposition that all men are created equal.” Frankly the boastfulness of this American patriotism excited among the fathers of this present generation of Englishmen a repugnance, of which the most brutal expression (strangely brutal for Dickens) is to be found in Martin Chuzzlewit. Now Hannibal Chollop and “our Elijah Pogram” are characters founded on fact. It is a sufficient explanation of their existence, and of the blatancy which partly infected American patriotism, that it

was a patriotism which had actually to be preached, which had to overcome the potent jealousy of a certain local loyalism attached to each of a number of States, and the detachment from all social ties of a motley immigrant crowd. And, apart from blatancy of expression, the patriotic boast was in its essence sincere. It would require a separate literary essay, with which I will not now threaten you, to show that those startling and much-derided phrases of the Declaration of Independence about equality came, not as is commonly supposed from French "*philosophes*," who are alleged to have been light-headed gentlemen, and who in fact had no experience of government, but from solid and intensely practical English jurists and statesmen who knew exactly what manner and degree of equality they intended to convey by their words. It is in any case certain that the better minds of America were moved from a very early date (the date when Marvell wrote those exquisite lines about the "remote Bermudas") with the sense that in the free spaces of a new world they were bound to build up a new commonwealth, in which the ordinary man should enjoy a better lot—should at least have a better chance to develop his manhood than ever he had enjoyed in the old. It is certain, too, that (beyond the fact of a prevalent actual equality which, thanks to nobody, exists in a yet unsettled territory and persists of itself for a considerable while) there has existed very abundantly in America a deeply religious sense of the infinite consequence in the eyes of God of every human soul. The stages by which that idea has developed

itself in the new country and the old are very different; the surprising fact is that at the end of it all a common danger has found us united in cherishing a certain idea of liberty and of human rights which is far too deep-seated on both sides of the Atlantic to invite quarrel about its exact definition.

Now I would have liked, but I must forbear save in a very few sentences, to recall to you the unique splendour of the actual history of the United States. Neither here nor there has anyone yet girded himself to write that history in a really dramatic form. I have pointed to the persistence in the United States of certain traditions partly derived from the old stock, partly, as I have just said, new made upon American soil. I have barely glanced at the opposing element (itself wealthy in poetic interest) with which the national idea has had to fight its way to union, the abundance and variety of every sort of unconventional and undisciplined but vigorous and self-assertive and romantically adventurous personality, attracted from every quarter of the globe to the new fields of the West. But in the space of its not very long history, America has passed through one crisis which in its dramatic interest surpasses that of any previous conflict. There never had been any war so rich in stirring incident, so harrowing in its unforeseen duration, so rich in striking and mainly noble personalities as the American Civil War. There never was any which on looking back can so plainly be regarded as a combat of the right and the wrong, yet there never was any in which (as in

true tragedy) sympathy is so equally enlisted by the antagonists on either side, or which so fully bears the character of a struggle between incompatible ideals, in which, well though we may rejoice at the triumph of the better, it thrills us no less to feel that on both sides men in multitudes came forth to die for impersonal causes which, right or wrong, they sincerely valued more than life and more than all material gains.

#### POSTSCRIPT, 1919.

This paper was written, as I have said, under a revulsion of feeling. On reading it again to myself I find nothing to retract or to qualify; but there is one thing which I wish to add: Walt Whitman was endowed with the gift of a noble charity, ranging wide and cutting deep. This illuminated his life, whatever his aberrations may have been, and it was no small part of his equipment as a poet.

I have not handled my subject with the least interest in scaring young persons from orchards where some of the fruit may be rotten. I should be very sorry if such poems as "Out of the Cradle Endlessly Rocking," or "When Lilacs last in the Door-yard Bloomed," ceased to find fit and numerous audience. Moreover—which is to the credit of Whitman's remaining soundness—the unsound element in him is peculiarly unseductive. I am therefore not concerned to argue with anyone who may rate the beauties which abound in him higher than I do myself. Only, he had a more or less distinct theory as to what was required of poets in



his own country and in the coming age, and his work, taken as a whole, is dominated by it. I began to examine this theory, and I came to the conclusion that it was a heap of rubbish, considerably putrid in parts, and as a whole not worth any man's while to sift.

Walt Whitman started theorising from two postulates. The first was that America had so far been poor in imaginative literature. In the latter part of my paper I suggested that this is no doubt a fact, but is quite without the significance which he (like many others) ascribed to it. His second postulate was that democracy, being a new thing in the world, demanded a new kind of poetry, differing all along the line from the older poetry, which, in England at any rate, he took to be associated with aristocracy. His own chosen example, Shakespeare, is perhaps enough to refute him; for though the fault with which he boldly taxes Shakespeare, namely a certain snobbishness, is there, it does not suffice to weaken his hold upon simple people. I believe, however, that Whitman's whole sentiment on this subject depends upon a very common fallacy, about which, though he certainly is not specially to blame for it, it may be well to say, in conclusion, a few words.

Democracy is not a new thing in the sense which Walt Whitman assumes. Of course the conditions, as to railway communication and other things, which make representative government with a wide franchise over a large area possible, are new. But a vigorous national life, in which large multitudes share, is something nearly as old as the hills.

Aristocracy, again, does not necessarily mean a principle of government hostile to democracy. Of course there is a sense in which it signifies that the life of many is in the highest degree controlled by a relatively small class exceedingly select and exceedingly highly trained, and the movements of thought in the body politic proceed altogether outwards from a defined inner circle of enlightened men. This is the ideal aristocracy which Plato embodied in that Republic, from which, very consistently, he excluded the poets, and the nearest practical approximation to it which the world has ever seen is the recently existing Prussian State. But "aristocracy" has far more often been the name of forms of society in which the people left the management of its public affairs to those who, from various circumstances, were in some sort its natural leaders. No doubt there has been a tendency constantly present for such a system to ossify into the selfish rule of an isolated class. But in the flourishing period of every great aristocratic state a contrary tendency has prevailed. There has been a felt community of temper between the governing class and ordinary men, and the whole body politic has perceptibly been directed by a public opinion and a common will by no means imposed upon subject minds from above. The twin factors, of leadership and of a mass which can respond to and which in turn inspires its leaders, have always been present, and will always be present in all healthy communities, greatly as the formal institutions necessary to their working have changed. Poetry, which is at all times concerned with the fundamental things in

which men of different ages and of different conditions differ least, has in all ages flourished most vigorously where the life of the community has itself been fresh and keen. In view of all this it seems an idle notion to expect a distinct and profound revolution in literature, and new and more definitely non-aristocratic poetry, because of the relatively superficial novelties which democracy in the political sense denotes. The adolescence of popular government may well produce one day a new outbreak of the power of song, which, like every other such outbreak in the past, will bear the marks of its own time; but the revival will as likely as not bear the character, in the main, of a return to very ancient fountains of living water.

Thus Walt Whitman's theories, and the respects in which he honestly thought himself and has been thought by some others to be a prophet and a pioneer, form no part at all of the strength which he had. His real contribution to America, to democracy and to poetry, came partly from the love of the very soil of his own country which he shares with all the poets; partly from the aforesaid charity of his, which travelled far afield, though not always unerringly, to find things of good report, and, if it did not eschew all things intrinsically base, at least hated some of them fiercely and hated nothing else.



## CULTURE AS THE BOND OF EMPIRE.

BY SIR FRANCIS YOUNGHUSBAND,  
K.C.I.E., F.R.S.L.

[Read April 28th, 1920.]

MAY I, at the start, briefly recall to your minds that the Empire, in addition to the sixty or seventy millions of British or European descent and of the Christian religion, contains about three hundred and fifty millions of Asiatics and Africans, of the Hindu, Mohammedan, Buddhist and other religions—men of every variety of type and of every grade of civilisation, from the lowest to the highest. And as it is among these non-British peoples that I have lived and worked during the greater part of my life—though I have also travelled in South Africa and Canada—it is to these that I shall be more especially referring in the course of this address. A man who has been constantly working among these very different types of people, and often under conditions when a slip will cost him his life, or bring trouble to his country and ruin his career, is all the time instinctively feeling his way towards some common ground between him and them. I propose to give you the result of my experiences and of my reflections on them.

My conclusion is this—and it will simplify matters

if I state it distinctly at once—that the common ground between us and them, as it must be between the Mother Country and her daughter Dominions, must be sentiment. Spirit is the only firm ground. The bond of union between the different parts of the Empire, in all their marvellous variety, must be a spiritual bond. And if a spiritual bond it must be of only the finest spirit. And the finest spirit is that of culture, a blend of society, art and thought, all three and all together springing from and shot through and through with religion. This is now my main thesis.

We have accomplished an enormous amount of splendid work throughout the Empire in establishing and maintaining order; in dispensing justice; in developing the material resources of the countries under our trusteeship by improving agriculture, conserving forests and opening up mines; in constructing roads, railways and telegraphs; and in fostering trade. We have trained the peoples in the art of self-government, and, in the case of India, have told the Indians frankly that we mean to work for the day when we shall be able to leave them to govern themselves as Australians govern Australia. All this on the political and material side we have done—and done magnificently. But we have not, on anything like the same scale of endeavour, attempted to reach the souls of the people. And until we touch soul to soul to the very bottom we are not sufficiently united. At present men are not getting what their souls demand and need. And three-quarters of the unrest in India and Egypt—as in England also—is unrest of soul. We have



indeed made serious and increasing efforts to educate the peoples, and missionary bodies have made heroic efforts to convert them to one or other of the different forms of Christianity. But education only touches youth, and the formal education of the classroom is only one of the influences which mould youth. And missionaries are so absorbed in spreading their own particular religion that they have little time, inclination or training for touching the people on those other sides of culture which are also necessary, namely, society, art and thought. Moreover, they devote so much of their energies to the conversion of the lower classes that the leaders of society, of thought and of art are hardly touched. Yet it is these leaders that it is all important we should reach.

But, at the outset, one appalling difficulty confronts us, and its immensity has haunted me for thirty years. Religion, which ought to be the central and most trusted strand of the bond that should bind us, seems only to be a stumbling-block and cause of offence. One solution of the difficulty is the obvious one of ignoring it altogether, placing no reliance on it and treating it as a matter of no importance. There are in every country so-called "practical" men on the one hand and self-styled "intellectual" men on the other, who regard it as a survival of more primitive days and of more superstitious people, which we will do well to put behind us in the superior days of enlightened manhood to which we are now supposed to have attained. But I doubt if such men can have had any wide and deep experience of real life. They must surely have

lived out of the great stream of life and out of touch with the warm realities of existence, in a tiny, dried-up world of their own. They can hardly have known the joy of the great elemental passions which stir mankind, and which, however harmful they be when uncurbed, are the foundation of all the highest things in life. Human nature must have become frozen within them, and because they have ceased to be human they are unable to be divine.

I would that there were some other word to denote that sentiment and idea which lies at the root of every man's life. And I wish men were not apt to apply the word "religion" exclusively to that form or expression of it which is most in evidence in the particular country in which they are born, and to conclude that those of their countrymen who do not subscribe to that particular form are therefore without religion. But regarding it in its broadest and truest sense we might just as well expect men to get on without love or without love of country as without religion. To the strictly practical or to the drily intellectual man love of country may appear utterly ridiculous. It must seem insanity rather than sense that a grown-up man of the world should deliberately and of his own choice, and merely from sentiment, leave his home and his friends and his riches and his comforts and all that has hitherto made life dear to him, and with actual joy in his heart face every conceivable horror and welcome death itself. Looked at drily and coldly it seems unaccountable that a sensible man should go through all this for only a sentiment. And yet something living and deep

within us tells us that love of country is one of the most real things in life and one of the most precious—something we would not part with for anything in the world—something which indeed we strive to deepen and strengthen and purify in every way we can.

I hope to show later on in this address that religion is a sentiment of precisely the same nature as—precisely the same as, not similar to—love of country. Quite unpractical, quite unreasonable, but for all of the very essence of life itself, so that without religion there can be nothing but stunted life. Irreligious men, like unpatriotic men, are only irreligious because religion has not been brought to them in a form which appeals to them or satisfies their needs. Let it come in the right form, in the right way and on the right occasion, and they will be as fervent and as united with their fellows and as purposeful as men throughout the Empire were in 1914—perhaps even more fervent, more united, and more purposeful.

Holding these views, I cannot, therefore, admit that the difficulty which religion presents in making a bond of union for the Empire can be got over by ignoring it. It does appear to divide rather than unite. The cynic scoffs as he sees the animosities between Christians and Mohammedans, Hindus and Buddhists; among the Christians between Roman Catholic and Protestants, Church of England and Dissenters; among the Mohammedans between Shias and Sunnis; among the Hindus between Sivaites and Vishnuites; and among Buddhists between the Northern and the Southern Dispensation. But if

the cynic drew from these conflicts the conclusion that there was no sentiment which would unite them all, he might prove just as badly in error as those were who believed that the scattered British Empire had nothing strong enough to hold it together, and would fall to pieces on the shock of war.

Religion cannot be disregarded and set aside. It should, on the contrary, be made the inmost strand of the tie which is to unite. The very intensity of the strife between rival sects and the frequency with which new sects are constantly arising within every one of the great religions of the world betoken the vitality of religion, and show that it fulfils some crucial need of the human race. Mankind is evidently struggling to get some inner craving of its nature satisfied. I have travelled, and lived and worked amongst and fought with or against men of all the great religions. I have seen them when their truest nature is bared. And when I have lived man to man with these peoples under life and death conditions, when they have stood by me and I have stood by them in many a critical moment, I cannot believe that if we peer far enough into the core of things we shall not find something working away at the heart that is all the time uniting us—something so supremely good that everyone can readily recognise its value, admire it and long to enjoy it.

When we look down from some high tower upon the streets beneath we see thousands of little human beings hurrying about without any apparent aim or unity. A bird perched on the top of Nelson's Monument in Trafalgar Square in the early days of

August, 1914, would have seen these tiny beings scurrying about hither and thither, running in and out of buildings, dashing about here, there and everywhere. And it would have supposed that there was no possible connecting link between them. And any intelligent German who was there on the 1st of August would have said that there was not only no connecting link, but positive antagonism between many of them—between Liberal and Conservative for example. Yet on the fourth of August it was discovered that these apparently disconnected or opposed men were all the time united at bottom by a sentiment which only required the occasion to evoke it, and which was so powerful as to sweep away every paltry antagonism—and that sentiment was love of country.

May it not be precisely the same with respect to human beings generally? May it not be that the differences between men of the various religions and sects are only surface differences, and not yawning, impassable gulfs fixed between them? May it not be that deep down there exists all the time and only awaiting the occasion to evoke it some all-powerful single, simple sentiment capable of uniting all nations and peoples? I believe there is such a sentiment; and I wish to put before you this evening a suggestion as to what that sentiment is. Possibly I may not have yet arrived at a right understanding. But I can assure you that I have searched hard and long, and have been ruthless with myself in casting out whatever will not stand the test of contact with real life. And as relentlessly as those who have to trust their lives to aeroplanes reject any material

with the slightest flaw or any engine which is not of the very best, I have rejected and will continue to reject any idea which is not trustworthy enough to support a man's life. But what I now suggest is, I believe, firm enough for that purpose—firm enough to support the Empire.

It is that the sentiment on which we should rely should be love of the world—love of country writ large to include the world as a living whole, not humanity only, but all living things and all nature—the entire Universe. An Englishman loves his country because he realises how much he owes her, how much she has done for him, how terribly he would suffer if she suffered, how proud he is of the glories she has won. He is perfectly aware of her many defects, and deficiencies, and imperfections. He knows that there is bad in her as well as good. But he has faith in her great heart, and faith in her intention to make bad good. He knows that at heart there is something ineffably sweet and lovable going out to him as he feels his heart going out to it. And because of this faith in her and because of this vision of the love and beauty at her heart he loves his country. So, likewise, do men love the world. They see in it a terrible amount of evil, fearful pain, meanness, sordidness, cruelty, oppression. Death is perpetually hovering over them, and is certain to come in three score years and ten. For all that man has preserved a touching and unconquerable faith in the goodness of the world. He is convinced that the world is good at heart—good and not wicked; that it is honestly striving to overcome the bad and make the



good more and more prevail; that there is at work in the world some vital impetus incessantly propelling it towards higher and higher perfection—propelling it to better the best. When he looks the world straight in the face and reads deep into it he does not see chaos, and inconsistency and infirmity. He sees order and system and form and unity. The tendency to organisation is evident throughout, from the tiny, furiously and unceasingly self-active electrons in their mutual influence upon one another organising themselves into atoms—from these up to human beings organising themselves into village communities, tribes, nations, empires, and, finally, a League of Nations. And while the evil is glaringly apparent, there is no doubt of the existence of good also. Nor is there any doubt of the marvellous power there is in good to transform evil. The way in which love of country transforms rogues into heroes is an example. And if through the ages love and fortitude, virtue and beauty have emerged, this surely is ground enough for holding that the heart of the world is good, that working within her, striving to express itself, is something good, that in the world, as we also feel within ourselves, there are infinite possibilities for good as the proper conditions are set up. When we see a man displaying high courage and true comradeship we say of him that he may have his imperfections, but he is good at heart, and we love him. And we love the world for exactly the same reason. We believe that it is good at heart.

And it is noteworthy that the finest and most sensitive souls among men are the most convinced

of the goodness of the world and love her most. Rupert Brooke, in a letter to his friend Keeling, who was disposed to take a pessimistic view of life, eloquently expresses the point I wish to put before you. In it he tells how he would roam about places and sit in trains, and see what he describes as "the essential glory and beauty" of all the people he met. "I tell you," he writes—and the heroic behaviour of the ordinary average man during the war shows how true his insight was—"that a Birmingham, gouty, fifth-rate business man is splendid and immortal and desirable." Brooke noted the same about things of ordinary life: "Half an hour's roaming about a street or village or railway station shows," he said, "so much beauty that it's impossible to be anything but wild with suppressed exhilaration. . . . In a flicker of sunlight on a blank wall, or a reach of muddy pavement or smoke from an engine at night there's a sudden significance and importance and inspiration that makes the breath stop with a sudden gulp of certainty and happiness." "I suppose," he adds, "my occupation is being in love with the Universe."

This is exactly the point I now wish to make. Moments do come which make us feel as if we were quite literally in love with the world—with this great beautiful living world around us. Some with intense vividness like Rupert Brooke, others of us only dully and vaguely, but all of us to some extent and at some moments do feel the wonderful lovableness of the world. I know that even primitive savages feel it. Terror and pain and sufferings there are. But there is glorious sunshine too, and beauty and

dear love, and in the heart of man this unfaltering conviction that the heart-beat of the world is pulsing to these very things that he himself most prizes. So man loves the world, and for the same reasons and in just the same way as he loves his country.

And it will make my position clearer if I state that I regard both the world and country as beings—as living beings, and this in no mere metaphorical sense but as a matter of actual fact. England, France, Australia are actual living beings. We have Frenchmen complaining that we English do not understand the soul of France, and when they thus speak of the soul of France they mean the soul of France—mean that France has a soul. And if France has a soul she obviously is a living being. I have not time to elaborate the point here, but if you will think it over you will see how clear it is that a country has a soul and a mind, intelligence and will, and a body too, the land of France or England or whatever the country is. This being, the country, is made up of individual Englishmen or Frenchmen, and those individuals have their own individualities, souls and wills and bodies, etc. But in spite of their possessing and retaining their own individualities, they do in their collectivity and mutual influence form another being—their country. And it is a matter of experience that the more perfect a collective being they form themselves into, the more fully they are able to develop their own individuality. There is greater individuality among the members of a European country than I have observed among

primitive communities. And as a country is a living being with a body, soul and spirit of her own, so also is the world a living being—the supreme being—likewise with a body, soul and mind, self-contained, self-governed and self-directed, and possessed of a power of self-improvement which is insistently driving it to better its best. It is towards this supreme being that our hearts go out in love, and it is from her heart that an overflowing love wells out to us. It was from the activity of that great love at the heart of the world that each one of us originally came to birth. It lapped about us in our infancy. Its soft wings sustain us through our lives. It fills our dying moments with a peace that passeth understanding—passeth understanding save by those who have themselves touched death's verge. Its dwelling-place is in the hearts of mother, father, nurse, sisters, brothers, comrades, friends, husband, wife.

Those who have vividly experienced this love of the world are acutely sensitive both to the goodness of the good and the badness of the bad. And such joy do they feel in the achievement of good and such horror in the sight of evil, that they become possessed with a passionate determination to achieve and spread the good and sweep away the evil. They long to save men from the pain that comes of evil and to make men know the joy that comes of good. In every country and among men of every religion we may see this happening. Some by temperament are more sensitive to the badness of the bad, and focus their energies on intensive eradication of evil. Others by temperament are more sensitive to the

goodness of the good, and concentrate their efforts on adding all they can to the good of the world and on making men realise the goodness of the good.

Love, whether it be love of an individual, or love of country, or love of the world, is an exceedingly active force once it is definitely aroused. And it is characteristic of love that it is determined to work for the good of its object. It is incessantly yearning to bring out all the good there is in its object, to make its object realise—bring into actual being—all of which it is capable. A man who loves his country or a man who loves the world wants to bring out all the good there is in his country or in the world—to make his country or the world realise, actualise all the good that is in them. And it may be remarked here that if the country and the world are beings they are beings in constant process of becoming—of becoming all that is in them to be. And they become what is in them to be through the activity of the individuals of which they are constituted.

But love in perfection is a reciprocal relation. We love; but we also want to be loved. When we both love and are loved the union is perfect. But there can be no perfect reciprocal relationship of this kind unless both parties are agreed as to what it is they value above everything else in the world. If one party attaches the highest value to one thing and the other party attaches the highest value to another thing there cannot be any truly intimate union between them. Only when their hearts are set upon the same thing can they be united at bottom. If of two men, each capable of making

either a million pounds or a beautiful poem, one prefers to make the money and the other the poem, there cannot be any deep union between them. Their habits of mind, manner of living, and way of looking at things will radically differ. On the other hand, if the future millionaire is quite incapable of making a poem yet appreciates the value of poetry, and realises how much good a good poem can do to hundreds of thousands of people for hundreds of years; and if recognising this he uses his money as a means for affording poets the opportunity for making poetry, the millionaire and the poet may very well be united in firm friendship. They will both appreciate the value of poetry, and both be bent upon doing their country and the world good by bringing good poetry into being. Thus when both parties attach value to the same thing they are united. But the closest union of all will come when they are not only attached to the same thing, but when that thing is the thing of most value in the whole world—and further, when they are agreed in continually searching for something of yet more value than that which they have already found, and refuse to be satisfied with anything less than the very best.

So we may be filled with love of our country and love of the world; determined to work for their good and bring out all the good that is in them, and most anxious that they should love us; but obviously the first thing to settle in our minds is our country's and the world's good—and not only what is good, but what is the *best*. If we can be certain as to what is the very best, if we find something



so patently better than anything else that men the world over will readily recognise it as the one thing above all others most worthy of their efforts and most desirable for the world, something which everyone naturally admires, and admires enthusiastically, something of superlative value to men in their common life as satisfying every deepest need of their nature, something which everyone would long to have as soon as he recognised its value and which everyone would enjoy having—if we can find such a thing men would naturally reach out after it. Obstacles, difficulties, dangers would not count. Overcoming them would only add zest to the enterprise. What they set so much value upon they would pursue with the light-hearted eagerness of children and with children's grace and ease. There would be no leaden-footed plodding, but effort winged with joy. And all being intent on the same thing, and that thing what can be shared by all, they would feel the same natural communion with one another that those feel who ascend a mountain to enjoy the beauty of some glorious view which its summit will disclose.

Can we find a thing of such outstanding worth? You all know that we can, and a thing within the reach of everyone. Character is usually put forward as the chief end to aim at. But it has associations in our mind with something over-rigid and stilted. In any case it is not sufficient. It does not permanently satisfy the deepest needs and cravings of the human heart. There are other things which more completely fill us with admiration and joy and are consequently better. Character is indispensable,

but only as leading to something of greater value beyond. . . . Justice is another thing held up to us as highly valuable. But like character, though absolutely necessary, it is not the thing of highest value. We may have justice reigning all round us. But if we have not got beyond that we shall not have reached the best thing in life. . . . Wisdom is another excellent thing. But even if we were all Solomons we should yet lack what is still more precious. . . . Freedom we all love. But freedom is of no use unless we know what to do with it. Men are very like those troop horses I used to see when with my regiment, who, when they got freedom, galloped up and down, kicking their heels in the air, but very soon found that the best use they could make of their freedom was to trot back to their troop. The companionship of their fellow kind was, after all, more to them than freedom. . . . And this brings us to the point that companionship, good fellowship, true comradeship, sociability, friendship, affection—all that is included in the word “love”—is what we most need and crave for and most admire and enjoy, and is therefore what is best, though bound up with love, and essential to it, must be character, the virtues and graces, the whole together combining into what is usually called goodness.

Yet goodness, with its apex of love, still does not fully suffice for the human soul. The soul has to express itself—express the feelings, sensations, impressions which the world about makes upon it; and in satisfactorily expressing itself to create a thing of beauty—a dance or a song or a picture or what not. Men need beauty as well as goodness.

And even beauty and goodness are not enough. Men crave for truth too. They must have all three—the triad goodness, beauty, and truth. And it is this combination and unification of goodness, beauty, and truth—those three, inseparably commingled, each complementing, strengthening and purifying the other, that is the most precious thing we know of. Truth alone would be pale and cold. We want light certainly, but not light without any colour or warmth. We know well how cheerless are those who pursue truth alone and nothing else. Beauty alone would be very attractive. Colour is always enchanting. But we cannot have colour without light and we cannot have beauty without truth. Warmth it is that we really want. We can have life without light or colour. There are living things which grub about in the earth or in the depths of the sea who never see any light or colour. But we cannot have life without some degree of warmth. Warmth is the prime necessity. Love and affection must be the first essential. But we can have no real life without light and colour in abundance. Truth and beauty must go with goodness. And the fountain-fire for all three must be world-love. All in their togetherness, for which culture seems to be the only word, is the thing of most worth and value in the world.

You will excuse me for reiterating what must be so well known and understood by you. I only do this because I want to emphasise the point I am now coming to—that even the most primitive people comprised in our Empire have some degree of culture as so conceived and love culture, and would

in my opinion gladly welcome whatever increases and refines it. I hold, moreover, that at this present moment when Bolshevism is being let loose in Asia, attention to culture is of the most urgent necessity. Culture is not a matter of reading, writing and arithmetic, history and geography, physics and chemistry. These are accompaniments of culture, but not its essence. Nor is culture any prerogative of the advanced races. It is not something that we "superior" people have to pump into "inferior" people who are quite empty of it. It is something which, in a rudimentary state, is already glowing in every people—something which all feel the need of and all enjoy having. If we watch children in the streets or village greens we notice that they naturally tend to congregate together and laugh and play. They enjoy each other's society and love to have it and to make their little friendships. Primitive people have just the same characteristic. They spend their lives together. They are naughty as children and fight and quarrel. For all that they cannot get on without each other's society. They laugh and chaff and are full of light-heartedness and good cheer. Their manners also are surprisingly good, and their devotion to children remarkable. Their moral code is different from ours, but they have their rules of behaviour and bind each other very strictly to them. Primitive people, therefore, do feel an insistent need for society and enjoy having it. They have a craving to give play to their affections and a need to have their craving satisfied.

Both children and primitive people have a similar craving for beauty. We know how children

love a band, and how they will dance round a barrel-organ when a valse is played. Primitive people, too, go wild with joy at music and dancing. They have a marvellous sense of rhythm, and the drum especially has an extraordinary effect upon them. . . . Primitive people, like children, also love being told stories, and all the better if they are told in verse. They are natural poets. Their language is full of imagery. And I was reading the other day of a Frenchman with a poetic turn who found he produced a much greater effect among the wild people of Cochin-China if he spoke in poetry than he did if he spoke in prose. . . . Children flock to a Punch and Judy show or any kind of play and delight in dressing themselves up and acting. Wild tribes on the Indian frontier have the same dramatic instinct. They will improvise a play and produce roars of laughter. Children and primitive people are also habitually wanting to fashion something with their hands, to mould, or carve, or draw or paint something. . . . From all of which indications we see how primitive people, like children, have this need in them to *express* themselves, and only get satisfaction when they *have* expressed themselves—either in speech, or in song, or in motion, or by the work of their hands. Beauty they must have.

How inquisitive children are as to the *reason* for everything, how endless their questionings we all know. The curiosity of primitive people is no less insatiable. They are observant of everything and constantly questioning its meaning. Their thirst for the truth about things is unmistakable.

Primitive people, as well as children, love flowers and animals and rivers and lakes and glorious scenery, and the sun and moon and stars and radiant sunsets. They are afraid of much in Nature—thunder and lightning and terrific storms and earthquakes, and they dread the mystery of disease. They feel awe at something terrible behind Nature. Yet they love her all the same. You cannot take a primitive man far from the surroundings he is accustomed to but he longs to get back to them. Without being aware of it he is deeply attached to his forests, or his mountains, or his plains. He is deeply attached, too, to Mother Earth. He believes her to be, as she *is*, a living being who brings forth bountifully what he needs—fruits and roots and berries and grain. Deep in his heart is an unsuspected love of the world.

As the human race, from children to grown men, and from the most primitive people to the most advanced, has these instincts rooted in it, culture will readily appeal to every people. They will quickly recognise its value. It is something whose value all men can easily appreciate once it is put before them. It is not a case of putting pearls before swine. It is a case of placing pearls before lovers of jewels. Pigs, of course, do not recognise the value of pearls, but even children and primitive men can appreciate their beauty. Similarly they can appreciate the value of culture. Culture is, too, something which when men know its value all will long to have. Stern self-discipline, long toil, pain and suffering will have to be undergone before what they prize is within their hands. But they will



endure all things as uncomplainingly and naturally as they endure dangers and hardships in the pursuit of game. These things they will regard as necessities, and no necessary self-discipline or hardship will deter them in the pursuit of what they really prize. They will rush to grasp it with the verve and abandon of children. A real craving of their nature will have been awakened and they will not stop till it has been appeased. And if we who value culture can make men understand that we wish, as individuals and as a nation, to be measured not by the money and motor-cars which we *possess*, necessary as those things are in a subordinate way, but by the amount and degree of culture we have to *give*—and give from sheer joy of getting others to share it with us—then men will naturally be drawn to us. And they will *remain* attached if they see that nothing short of the best will satisfy us, and that even the best we mean to *better*.

“Where our treasure is there will our hearts be also.” If we regard culture as our treasure our hearts will be where culture is to be found. And if our hearts are set on culture all men’s hearts also will be drawn unto ours, for it is something for which all men inwardly crave.

Culture, then, the blending of goodness, beauty and truth; of warmth, colour and light; of society, art and thought, all three fired by religion conceived of as a passionate world-love, love of the world, love of life, love of the glories and beauties which living things and all Nature declare, love of that loving-kindness and lovableness which dwells at the heart of the world and makes itself manifest in the lives of

men and women—this is what peoples of every variety and of every grade of civilisation throughout our Empire need and want to have and would rejoice in having. It is something towards which the activities of all these varied peoples would naturally converge. Culture, and nothing less, must be the bond which shall bind our great Empire together.

And if it is on these lines that we work, and if working on these lines we can accomplish a task of such palpable delicacy and difficulty as holding together so great, so varied and so scattered an Empire as ours, we shall have furnished the world with a visible, practical example of what man can do in uniting and uplifting the race. And using the mighty agency of the whole united Empire we should be able to give a lead to all mankind, and play the foremost part in controlling the destinies of the entire human species. Culture will give coherence and aim and direction, first to the Empire, and then, through the Empire, to the world. Culture, too, will furnish the driving force by which we shall be able to make the world become all that we know it might be and all we mean to make it.

No less than this should be our ambition. And to accomplish it we must look first to the leaders of society, the leaders of art, and the leaders of thought. And if we attach to goodness chief value, and in goodness the principal value to love, that is, to friendship, sociability, good fellowship, true comradeship, then we shall attach the highest importance to what is vaguely known as “society,” and the society we look to will be that of men and women

of the world and of affairs, men of character and intelligence and of grace and charm, but, above all, of a great heart and an abundant capacity for affection, and for intensest feeling—men who are good company in the best sense of the term. Political leaders loom so large in our national life that we are in danger of looking upon them as the real leaders of the nation. We should be nearer the mark if we chose our leaders among men of thought and art. And we should be nearer still if we looked for them among men with a genius for friendship and society, men with the knack and aptitude for genialising all sorts and conditions of men, men who are at home among their fellows and can bring into harmony all kinds of discordant elements. But we shall not have hit the mark exactly until we have found leaders who are men of thought and men of art as well as men of society. In short, they must be men of culture, culture being understood to have religion as its base and to comprise society, art and thought integrated in a single whole, but with the chief emphasis on society. They will be men of heart and hand, and head and backbone, with the chief emphasis on the heart, and with the remembrance that the reason why the backbone plays so important a part in life is because it is not absolutely stiff and straight, but beautifully curved and pliable, so that it is able to stand strains and shocks which would snap a ramrod, and stand firm, not because of its rigidity, but because of its flexibility and spring.

And these men of culture will not be pale, anaemic and exotic, too delicate for the rough out-

door life of the world. They will indeed be refined to the last degree, tempered as the truest steel, sensitive as the needle of a compass. But they will be men of the world rather than of the studio and study; men of the country as well as of the town, and of the town as well as of the country; men of the mountain as well as of the plain, and of the plain as well as of the mountain; men of the air as well as of the earth, and of the earth as well as of the air; men as well as gentlemen, and gentlemen as well as men. And as likely as not some of the best men will be women, for as the emphasis has been laid upon society and upon the heart, and women have had all these thousands of years to be in closest touch with the deeper realities of life and to practise the most difficult of all arts—the making of a home—they may prove more apt than men to develop the highest form of culture.

Men and women of this type are needed; and when culture is already to some degree glowing in the hearts of men, it only needs the breath of a kindred spirit to kindle it into fervent flame. Let men be touched by one who is himself ablaze with the joy of good fellowship and love, with joy in the beauties of nature and of poetry, music, and all the other forms of art, and with joy in reaching truth after truth—let men be touched by one who is himself glowing with the joy of these very best things in life, and all the natural instincts within them will at once burst out in flaming life.

As to how we may in actual practice vivify culture and make it serve both as the bond and end of empire I will now make a few suggestions.

There exists a small society, known as the India Society, which was formed a few years for the purpose of making Indian art and thought known in Great Britain. It was, I am told, through the instrumentality of this Society that the poems of Rabindra Nath Tagore were brought to the notice of men of letters in Europe. Those who were really competent to appraise Tagore's poems set high value on them. He received recognition in this and other countries, and was awarded the Nobel prize. Now this recognition of an Indian poet by British and other poets was of importance, as showing Indians that we do set value on spiritual things, and not only on railways and telegraphs. The respect of Englishmen for Indians was certainly increased. We can imagine, too, that the respect of Indians for themselves was increased. And possibly the respect of Indians for us was increased. If cases like these were multiplied we might well suppose that a strong tie would be set up between the leading men of letters in India and the leading men of letters in this country, and this would be of unmistakable value, for men of letters can do much to influence the people of a country. . . . Another lesson may be drawn from this case. An Indian told me that Tagore would often lie out in his Indian garden reading Wordsworth, and that while he lay and read an inspiration would come to him, and he would spring up and compose a poem. The English poetry had had a stimulating effect upon him. An Indian had benefited by the stimulus of British poetry. But for all that Tagore's poetry was essentially Indian. He had not slavishly imitated Wordsworth any more than

another English poet would imitate him. He had absorbed Wordsworth and given out his own poetry on his own Indian lines. And this is how we would have it. For his poetry and stories, being Indian, reach the Indian people as no English poetry could. Thousands enjoy it. Indian culture is enriched and refined.

Another example of what might be done to promote interchange of culture between India and Britain is the translation by the poet Laurence Binyon of the ancient Indian drama "Sakuntala," by Kali Das, and its production in London. Of course, much also has been done in translating Indian literature and in making Indian painting known in England. I simply quote these cases as instances of the kind of activities which I maintain should be now undertaken on a great scale. What has been done for one Indian poet should be done for others who may be worthy. And what has been done for a poet should be done for Indian novelists, painters, sculptors, architects, musicians. And what has been done for art should be done for Indian thought (for philosophy and science) and for Indian religion. Reciprocally much, too, should be done in the way of making British art and thought and religion known to Indians. . . . And then India is only an example of what should be done in other parts of the Empire—in the interchange, for example, of Arab and British literature, art and philosophy. Associations like the India Society doubtless will spring up. What the public has to do is to recognise the value and importance of the work they do. It all tends to bring us in touch



with the very soul of these peoples and to reveal our soul to them. We get in the first place understanding. And then if they are able to see that we have our hearts dauntlessly set upon attaining those things which are by the common consent of mankind of most worth in life, and that all we attain we share with them, then we may at least hope that in addition to respect will come attachment.

This interchange of the products of culture is one type of action we might take. A better is the interchange of visits of the leaders of culture with one another. Let each see the other in his own surroundings—leaders of society, leaders of art, leaders of thought and leaders of religion. Each will be better able to understand the culture of the other—and having understood it to vivify it, quicken its life, intensify its activity. This also will be good.

But the bulk of the work will have to be done by the ordinary everyday Englishman who has to come into personal contact with these non-British people. And the first thing he must do is to understand their culture. I can say this from my own experience—that when I was sent to Tibet, knowing nothing whatever about the Tibetans, I felt at once the profound practical necessity of being acquainted with Tibetan culture and of getting at their soul. Until I knew what was going on inside them—what was their natural disposition, what was their outlook on life, what was their conception of the world—and similarly until they understood these things about us—I could not effectively deal with them. This, too, is the common experience of officers with Indian regiments and of civil administrators. Those

who have to deal with non-British peoples, whether those men be military officers or civil administrators or engineers or policemen or traders, or whatever they be, must understand the *culture* of the peoples with whom they have to deal. They must also be men of culture themselves. If they are not already they must make themselves such, and continue to make themselves such for the rest of their lives. And this they can readily do, for culture is within the reach of all men. Every man has opportunities every day of his life of increasing his inherent capacity for enjoying beauty and the company of his fellows; of profiting by his eagerness for truth; and of developing his love of country and love of world. Each will have his own special activity upon which he will concentrate his energies. But behind that particular activity, and as a well-spring to draw from, should be this universal culture ever spurting up from within him. The importance of being cultured should be dinned into every man who leaves these islands.

He knows the value of a precious jewel; he should be made equally certain of the value of culture—that it is of the greatest possible value in life. If the average Englishman gives to Indians, Egyptians, Arabs, Africans and others all over the Empire the impression that he has not a soul above mere efficiency and orderliness, they will certainly respect him more than they respect a man who only sets store on amassing money and living a life of luxury, but he will not secure their attachment. They will admire his energy and his business capacity, but they will not want his company.

They will prefer to be without him. No one can really enjoy intercourse and association with another who attaches great value to what he cares little for and small value to what he most prizes. If, on the contrary, the ordinary Briton who goes out into the Empire quite evidently sets the highest value on sociability, courtesy, friendship, on beauty, truth and religion, on all we mean by culture, he will be in a fair way to gain men's affection, for these are things which all men prize, and association with men who also prize them is always agreeable. Could multitudes of Britons be of this mind the Empire would be safely bound together.

Perhaps it may not always be outwardly apparent, perhaps they may not often speak of it, perhaps they may not even be aware of its existence, but burning unwaveringly within them will be the steady flame of pure blue love of country and love of the wonderful, beautiful world around them from which they derive all the love they have ever felt and all the love they have ever received.

A final word. I believe in Scotsmen always being Scottish, Welshmen always being Welsh, as I myself hope always to be English. I distrust hugger-mugger conglomerations of men. I believe in each component part of the Empire preserving its individuality, and not only preserving it but intensifying it. We shall get a higher degree of unity through individual peoples preserving their individuality than we ever should by allowing them to jumble up in a general *mêlée*. Welshmen must remain Welsh but become more Welsh, Australians remain Australian but become more Australian.

Love of country does not diminish, but accentuates personal love. Men who went to the war did not love their mothers and wives the less, but the more. The quickened love of country strung up their whole personality so that they were able to give more, not less of personal love. In the same way love of world will not decrease but intensify love of country. Rupert Brooke was in love with the Universe, but his beautiful sonnet, "The Soldier," shows how intense also was his love of England.

But while we each preserve and enrich our individuality, the Empire will be all the better if we indulge in healthy emulation of one another. Each of us sister nations will set to work on our own lines in accordance with our own special aptitudes, and we will emulate the best in each other. But we will all join together in one great Commonwealth, which we will strive to make famed in history, not for mere magnitude, for the vastness of its territory, and the prodigious number of its population, nor yet for its enormous wealth and the extent of its trade, but because every nation of which it was composed was fired with supreme devotion to one single purpose—fitting the Empire to be the means of enabling the world to become all that heart and mind know there is in it to be.

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